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Volume Eleven

FIRST SERIES

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Vol. XIX

MONOGRAPHS

LUCIEN LABAUDT

OTIS OLDFIELD

MATTHEW BARNES

Gene Hailey, Editor
Abstract from California Art Research
W.P.A. Project 2874, O.P. 65-3-3632

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L U C I E N L A B A U D T

1880..... . . .

Biography and Works

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LUCIEN LABAUDT

There comes to everyone who has known Lucien Labaudt for a considerable length of time, either through personal contact or the medium of his work, a desire to know his changing past, the nature and experience that he gathered from his adventures, and the framework upon which he has constructed some of his notable works of art. In order to satisfy this curiosity, let us look back and clearly sketch Labaudt's life from the time of his birth in Paris--"that charmed city of romance-touched artists."

To a man like Labaudt, who loves and knows Paris, there comes a desire to communicate constantly with memories of her life and art. Her voice is a troubling thing like an insistent demand spoken in a foreign tongue. Paris, with her separate existence and a soul of her own, is the city where Labaudt was schooled, and true to her reputation, Paris cast her spirit with a peculiar fidelity upon young Labaudt's art career.

GENEALOGY

Lucien Labaudt was born on May 14, 1880, the second son of French parents. His father, Ernest Labaudt, was a bank employee and his mother, Camille (Mahieux) Labaudt, was a dressmaker, a calling which greatly influenced young Labaudt's artistic career. His mother was co-owner of the dressmaking firm of "Robina-Labaudt" in Paris; an undertaking which she

kept up until the year 1892 when she was forced to give up her partnership on account of high government taxes on dresses. This, incidentally, corresponds to the 65 per cent tax on dresses in the United States.

Lucien Labaudt came of a long line of French craftsmen and artisans, and ascribes his success much to this hereditary influence. His paternal grandfather and grandmother are of Flemish and Italian descent respectively, while his maternal grandparents are of French descent. His grand-uncle, Charles Piccacio, was a painter of some note in his day. Piccacio, however, like a great many artists, died in poverty, an incident which made Labaudt's father bitter against the art profession. From then on, the father decided that young Labaudt should keep away from art and go into banking. On several occasions, the elder Labaudt endeavored to draw the youthful Lucien's attention to his own chosen profession--that of a banker; however, the boy's passion for art was too great to be easily subdued. From childhood, an inherent artistic understanding appeared in Labaudt. Owing to a lack of proper opportunity and guidance born of the indifferent attitude of his father, Labaudt turned to commercial costume art. Here was a beginning of an outlet for the urge that was constantly at work within him. In this art, he distinguished himself in Paris and later in England as a notable designer for "the trade" in ladies gowns and "ensembles". As a fashion artist

and style originator Labaudt was ever alert to the laws of design as found in the Fine Arts of painting and sculpture.

During his boyhood in Paris, Labaudt went to a grammar school where art was taught. He also made occasional visits to the waterfront of Paris, to watch the ships along the river Seine. Here the dots on the rippling water of the river impressed the boy very much, and puzzled his young mind. It was then that this light effect revealed to him his first sight of the art movement in which he, later on, was to take part as one of its most active exponents.

At the age of sixteen, he went to a school of design in Paris, where he took up the principles of cutting fabric on the draped figure and geometry as related to constructive art proportions. Under the academicians, he was taught to draw, to use color according to the academic formula of pigments ground from earth colors, as used on sober studio palettes before colors became gay and fresh as in nature out of doors. However, Labaudt was not satisfied for he felt unable within these old formulas to express what demanded fresh expression. And so he broke away from the old and turned to new activities. After this early training, Labaudt became entirely his own art mentor as he developed through his enthusiasm for new methods and manners, to his place in the fine arts world, of today.

HIS SUDDEN INTEREST IN SPORTS

From the time he was sixteen until he was twenty-four years of age, Labaudt took a most unusual interest in sports; particularly football. At the age of twenty-one, he went to London to play football with the expert rugby team known as the London Welsh, and here began to study painting and drawing. While he was still playing football he accepted a position as head costume designer of the London firm of Charles Lee and Sons, where he worked until he left for the United States in 1906. During this period of his life, football was his first thought, and painting became secondary. However, his interest in original design grew while he was in London. For his fashion sketches he visited the many museums of London to study the history of costume and art. Here he found ideas which he incorporated in his designs. Fabrics, draperies and statuary were his favorite subjects. It was in this frame of mind that he came to the United States in 1906.

AMERICA-BOUND

After three years in London, the adventurous Labaudt packed his belongings and boarded an ocean liner for America. He chose Nashville, Tennessee for the first four years of his life in the United States. During his brief stay in Tennessee, he made occasional visits to New York where he drew costume plates for such leading fashion magazines as: "Vogue", "Harper's Bazaar", and "Dress". While in Nashville, he opened

a studio for costume designing, stage scenery, and whatever other work might come his way. It was then that he began his experiments in color which later led him on to keep step with modern color theories in the fine arts, as they affect dress, the theatre and the applied arts.

THE CEZANNE INCIDENT

One day in the year 1908, two years after his arrival in the United States, a landscape painting by Cezanne, reproduced on the cover of the Literary Digest, attracted his attention. The painting, by this master of contemporary French art, so impressed Labaudt that he immediately bought materials to paint again in oils for himself. In the same year, shortly after the Cezanne inspirational incident, he began to exhibit his canvases in Chicago. Snow scenes, barns, farmhouses, and chickens were his favorite subjects. However, he continued his costume designing as a means of livelihood. In the meantime, the works of George Seurat, a French artist of the "Neo-Impressionistic" school of painting, influenced Labaudt to further studies of the principles of color and line. Labaudt regards Seurat as the truest founder of the modern art movement. So under the influence of Cezanne and Seurat, Labaudt painted the Tennessee scene as he sought to refine and systematize the harmony of pigment they practiced. This study of color relation has gone on ever since, especially with reference to the scientific work of the physicists who study "color

as light vibration," until now Labaudt claims to have formulated "a science of color similar to the scientific order of tones evolved by musical theorists." He has experimented with many techniques and manners until today he has perfected a law of color values that is accepted as sound by most modern color theorists. Both scientific and artistic researchers acclaim Labaudt.

The period between the years 1906 to 1910, was the beginning of a long series of experiments, of constant study and a continuous search for new mediums through which to express himself.

LABAUDT GOES TO SAN FRANCISCO

In 1910 Lucien Labaudt came to San Francisco with the intention of doing mural decorations in connection with the rebuilding of the City after the great earthquake of 1906. He has made his home in San Francisco ever since. He found the field in mural decorations unprofitable so he resumed his costume designing, at the same time painting and teaching. From then on, Labaudt's life was a series of progressive steps in art expression. He also became affiliated with the San Francisco Art Association, and exhibits with that group now. Not only was he then the fashionable California "French costume designer", promoter of "Style Salons", but he became a colorful figure in the art life of San Francisco. His lectures, his fashion shows, his settings for great "artists

balls" became part of the local "modern art" impetus. On several occasions, Labaudt has taken an active part in the annual "Parilia and Costume Ball" in San Francisco. On one of these occasions, in the year 1935, Labaudt was chosen pageant master of the gala affair. Again, early in 1936, Labaudt served on the ball committee in the capacity of art director. In explaining the pageantry of the ball--"The Fall of Angkor-Vat"--Labaudt made it clear that the spirit of the period and the custom it depicts, rather than authenticity of the period portrayed, is the real aim of the affair.

Labaudt began painting in San Francisco as a Cubist, interested in abstract "dynamic symmetry". For this reason, when he was accused of being unable to paint realistically, Labaudt turned to the figure and the natural world, which he now renders in a successful decorative manner based on scientific space relations.

LABAUDT'S PHILOSOPHY OF WORK

In Labaudt's own words, he holds that:

> "It is only convention which makes us demand form in our art expression. The basis of modern art, it should be understood at the outset, is absolutely scientific. Color today is a science, and no longer merely a matter of the taste of the individual. There is still room in modern art, however, for the individuality of the artist to express itself; but his foundation must be scientific modern art. He must make use of the algebraic formulas governing the division of a given space."

According to Labaudt, Cubism is the highest form of art yet expressed. "When the Cubists came upon the scene," Labaudt said, "there was difficulty in understanding their work. People were slow to realize that Cubist works were to be regarded not so much as pictures as 'color ensembles'."

Labaudt recognizes three great influences on his work, that of Seurat in color, of Henry Varnum Poor in figure painting, and of Arthur Barrows in composition. Barrows, a mathematician, taught him the geometric principles of pictorial organization, and he studied with Poor during the New York artist's stay in San Francisco as a teacher.

Since 1910, Labaudt has taught costume design and color construction at the California School of Fine Arts exhibited in various American galleries, and founded and conducts the California School of Design. This school of his own is unique as a school of costume design, where the aesthetic laws are taught in both theory and actual practise with fabrics. Under his able guidance, this school has been responsible for numerous original creations in the realm of fashion. It sets a pace for many of the also-ran schools of costume design on the Pacific coast.

Basing its principles on Labaudt's conception of art, the school offers a creative method whereby the student is made to understand that costume apparel can be made to have as much personality and beauty as a work of art. Students are trained

to understand the fundamental principles of color and form before being led to the technique of fashion design.

To the designing of women's garments Labaudt brings the competence of the artist; he clothes the body with as much care as he paints it. Labaudt believes that a woman's dress today is a blossom of that strong, vigorous, and scientifically solid branch of modern art called Cubism.

Labaudt has been conducting the California School of Design since 1920, and first taught at the California School of Fine Arts in 1919, and has been connected with that institution ever since as teacher and lecturer.

HIS EARLY EXHIBITIONS

Lucien Labaudt has been represented in every annual exhibition in local civic museums since 1920. He has also participated in almost all of the important exhibitions of the San Francisco Art Association and the Palace of Fine Arts since 1916. His early contributions consisted of still life paintings, landscapes, figures, abstractions, oils and charcoals. During the years 1920-25, he exhibited at the Bohemian Club. Oils, abstractions, and figures were his contributions. His work became a center of interest and controversy because of his daring treatments of usual and unusual subjects. "The Raven" was representative of his exhibits during that period. From 1922-1931, Labaudt participated in the exhibitions of the Society of Independent Artists in New York. "The Man with the

Gray Hat", cubist; "The Last Rose of Summer", and "The Raven" were hung during these exhibitions. In 1926 he was represented at the Galerie Pleyel in Paris, together with a number of outstanding modern French painters such as; Matisse, Picasso, Derain, Gromaire, and Rouault. He has exhibited at the Salon Des Independants in Paris each year from 1921-1926 inclusive. His works hung at the Salon D'Automne, in Paris, in the years 1924, 1925, 1926, and at L'Ecole de Paris in 1928. "The Man in the Gray Hat", and "L'Oncle", were exhibited in the former. On three occasions--1931, 1933, and 1935--his works were hung in the Carnegie "International" at Pittsburgh.

Of his "Atelier", which hung at the International Exhibition of the Carnegie Institute in 1931, Jehanne Bietry Salinger, art critic of the Courier du Pacifique, wrote:

"----gives expression to his need to be in time with the tempo of the machine age. It is systematized and alive with the beats of organized modern life."

Two years after his first exhibition at the Carnegie Institute, his painting entitled "At the Creek" was included among the reproductions preceding the text of the catalogue of the 31st International Exposition of Painting.

Among the 103 paintings in the American section of the 1934 Carnegie Institute International Exhibition of Paintings was Labaudt's "Size 48".

The following year another canvas was sent to the Carnegie Institute Exhibition of that year. This piece,

"Shampoo At Moss Beach," attracted considerable attention and caused artists of note to exchange heated views and arguments upon the real merit of the paintings. This painting was admirably executed and beautiful in color. The piece consists of a plaster cast of a woman, head and torso, a wreath, a Grecian vase, an architect's compass, a cowboy's leather glove, an evening sandal on a shoe-tree--the shoe-tree is one of the feet of a radio table. On the top of the table are many implements used for beautifying one's self, a powder box, a fluffy puff, and many perfume bottles. From under the table project two female legs partly draped with a Spanish shawl; a western rancher's hat, a lace curtain, a tree, a castle, a whole city of cards, midget figures, dream-lovers walking toward the palace of cards; another couple walking away over the clouds; the vast ocean, a steamer going somewhere, then the sky at daybreak, or perhaps at dusk. In the foreground, in the right corner of the picture is a water tumbler filled with daisies.

Labaudt put a whole world of objects in this picture; objects of all kinds, fully disparate, incongrous in their every day association, yet, thanks to the artist's imagination, we have a perfect composition.

In the meantime, in the year 1933, a painting by Labaudt was exhibited in the Museum at Los Angeles, which was given a very interesting and a very flattering comment by the eminent art critic Arthur Millier. In this same year, Labaudt

was given signal honor when his "Bonnet Vert" was chosen by Dr. Walter Heil, director of the Palace of the Legion of Honor and of the de Young Museum, to be sent to the "All American" Exposition in New York.

Immediately following this the ever-ambitious Labaudt began another important piece of work, an order for a decoration on the high wall of the facade of a market on Broadway, near the corner of Polk Street, San Francisco.

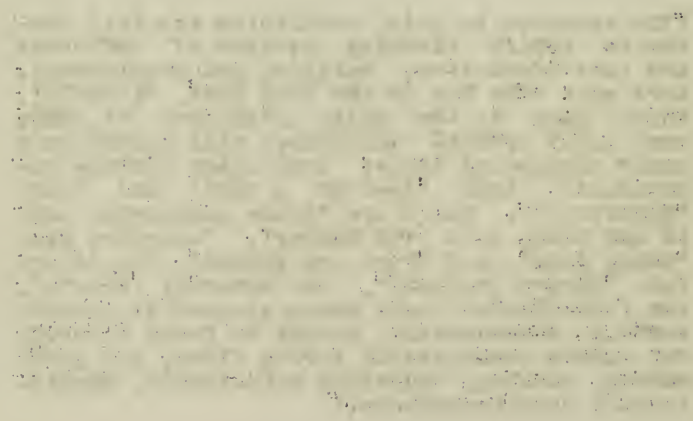
In this decoration, which was painted in oils, on the wall itself, the artist has used his imagination liberally. He depicted the California landscapes with which we are familiar, the little farms one sees on the coast of the Salada Shore, the hills, the potato fields, the winged animals full of life, the cattle which lightly walk to and fro, suspended above the quarters occupied by the butcher, the fine crabs, appetizing as those which move their many claws on the marble slab of the fishmonger. He likewise painted a scene in the cellar of the market; the large kegs, well filled and burnished brown, and tasting a new wine, he made a portrait of the artist Foujita and his French wife and of himself drinking to the success of one another.

Often groups of people gather at the corner of Broadway and Polk, commenting on details of this wonderful piece of work; intrigued by the imagination, picturesqueness, good design, and rich color used by Labaudt.

LABAUDT'S FIRST LARGE ONE-MAN SHOW

In the year 1933, Labaudt presented a retrospective exhibition of his paintings at the Palace of the Legion of Honor. This exhibition, which was Labaudt's first large one-man show, included the major number of his painted works. In the 77 canvases displayed during the exhibition, was condensed 27 years of a most consistent search for the answer to the fundamental problems of painting. As a whole, the collection is a history of twentieth century French painting. "Many of the canvases presented are marked with stinging irony, satire of modern trends of art, and harsh cynicism, but at times his work achieves an emotional impact rare in modern paintings." In this collection was traceable a more highly developed sense of artistic realism--a quality strangely lacking in most artists. Of this collection, Howard Talbot, art critic, Wasp-News Letter wrote:

> "The canvases in this exhibition are well chosen to typify blending periods of influence and experimentation, building and development. Here are: 'The Man in the Gray Hat', 'L'Oncle', which hung in the Salon D'Automne of 1925; some gayly lyrical landscapes with picknickers under blossoming trees; some color harmony experiments, like 'Head of a Girl' and later 'Skyscraper'. There are figure paintings, solid and bold, like '450 Sutter', fantasies like 'Going Away', and 'Poet and Indian', the colorful 'Shrimp Cocktail', the powerful 'Siesta', the full-fleshed lusty nudes, pleasantly coarse, earthly, nonchalantly orange or putty colored, but always unmistakably living flesh, big girls wading, bathing, squeezing bath-towels, magnificently unselfconscious."



As a rule artists are lacking in wholeness and completeness of nature. To Labaudt, however, the very concentration of vision and the intensity of purpose which is the characteristic of the artistic temperament, is in itself a mode of limitation to his burning passion for self-expression. He found through color, a voice of interpretative greatness and depth. "He paints for the mind through the eye, as an individual expressing personal reactions."

Writing of Labaudt and his retrospective exhibition, Jehanne Bietry Salinger said:

> "The painting of Labaudt is like a living composition on this coast of the Atlantic, of the fine traits of French painting. Through his works one perceives again Watteau, Chardin, Courbet, Delacroix, Manet, and Cezanne. The work of Labaudt is also a composite of the whole evolution of modern art. It is a condensation of all the experience of fifty years of painting in the great movement of contemporary art."

Speaking of his landscapes, the same writer wrote:

> "His landscapes are romantic and some of his moods are pure lyricism. At times Labaudt retires into the sacred intimacy of his emotions. 'Going Away' with its shower of petals of roses, its figures in the sky, evokes the art of Fantin Latour, also of William Blake. 'Poet and Indian' is another of these fugitive moments in which the painter is an enchanting romanticist. 'Shrimp Cocktail' transposes the local color of San Francisco's famous Italian fishermen's wharf into surrealist art. A supreme quality is born of the play of his immediate environment with all that which he has brought to it."

Labaudt has a craft and a technique that might be the envy of a great many of our artists in the West. His work has of necessity been an echo of his artistic background with its many evident influences. However, his canvases are characterized by unusual freshness of theme and treatment. He caught the echoes of a far wider and finer field than his worthy predecessors. There is to be found in Labaudt's work some originality and a distinct individuality. He utilized subjects quite overlooked by his contemporaries as well as his predecessors, and has treated them from his own angle, apparently quite regardless of what other artists might think, or how upsetting to the artistic standards of the time. It was by grounding his art in these radical, quasi-scientific theories that Labaudt rose from a mere designer of women's clothes to a painter of prominence.

From the standpoint of color Labaudt's work shows a fine understanding of the importance of placing warm tones next to the cold ones. In this connection, Jehanne Bietry Salinger said:

> "Discipline, in the science of painting, has today become second nature to this artist. Master of his palette, Labaudt composes on a definite scale of values. With the degree of intensity of his values he expresses the character of his forms, he creates local color and mood.....
>
> "On the scale of red, yellow-green, and blue, he plays his own variations. He loves the female figure, and his nudes combine a grace of form, a subtlety of coloring and a mood so exquisite that they are in a class by themselves."

In the same connection, Junius Cravens, art critic in the San Francisco News wrote:

> "It is in the use of modulated color that Labaudt chiefly distinguishes himself. Whether dealing with lyrical or romantic subjects, with landscapes or the human form, color is his paramount concern. It is true that muddy color sometimes creeps into his flesh tones here and there, giving his numerous nude ladies a somewhat soiled appearance. But in such cases he has usually been thoughtful enough to supply the said ladies with towels."

Not only has Labaudt won notice in European exhibits but also has shown remarkable skill and talent in costuming. His local exhibitions are worth remembering. In 1927, his composition, "Reclining Nude", won him the much coveted Anne Bremer prize of $200 for that year. He is praised among artists especially for his nudes and his mastery of color. Five years after he won the Anne Bremer award, in 1932, his "After the Swim" won first prize at Gump's First Annual Competitive Exhibition of oil paintings. Here again in nudes Labaudt is most consistently impressive. "He creates the womanly form with broad gusto, makes it sculptural, and enlivens its surface with a fat feeling of flesh."

LABAUDT AROUSES CONTROVERSIES

On several occasions, Labaudt, through his radical paintings, has aroused controversies among the ranks of the artistic luminaries of San Francisco and Los Angeles. On all occasions, however, he came out triumphant.

In 1934, when the Los Angeles Art Association All-California Art Exhibition was held, a nude painting by Labaudt was rejected. When news of the rejection got around to the other artists, they sounded a protest. Five artists, Warren Newcomb, Stanley Reckless, Paul Semple, Millard Sheets, and Mac Donald Wright mutinied, went on strike, delivered ultimatums, and threatened to leave if the rejected canvas was not included in the show. Soon after this demonstration, the painting which was "an assemblage of octahedrons, rhomboids, parabolas, and trajectories that express a modernists idea of the human form", was finally hung along with the other paintings. This was the second controversy aroused by Labaudt's seemingly radical tendency in his art works; the first being with Haig Patigian, past president of the Bohemian Club.

SURREALISM AND POST-SURREALISM

Lucien Labaudt's latest adventure in the realm of modern art is that of Surrealism and Post-Surrealism. Surrealism is generally regarded as an interesting but transitory movement. Its aim is to produce images from the subconscious without the intervention of will or reason. But since man's desire is always to bring order out of chaos--the very basis of all arts--the surrealists method tends to become a way of discovering new material for works of art, rather than a method of creating art.

That is where the post-surrealists step in, and Lucien Labaudt fits somewhere between theories with a lucid little "Birth of Venus".

Post-Surrealism, as the name implies, is the aftermath of Surrealism. It is a new art, and in the words of Junius Cravens, it is tersely described as:

> "-----a raft of flotsam and jetsam of assorted wreckage,-----.
>
> "The Post-Surrealist raft is built not only of odds and ends of Surrealism but also of almost everything from primitive African Negro sex symbolism to tintypes....."

"Song of the Seas" and "Accordion Player" are two of Labaudt's representative contributions to this movement. These were exhibited in Hollywood, and subsequently at the San Francisco Museum of Art. In connection with these two pieces of work, Junius Cravens wrote:

> "Labaudt's 'Song of the Seas' and 'Accordion Player' two recipes for the same dish, have a unity of design which is not evident to me in his other works. Though they may be 'highly conscious' they do not seem to 'total up a universal idea', which Post-Surrealism has been said to do."

Labaudt, who may be called a "Don Quixote" of art, sub-consciously painted himself as such in his "Accordion Player". His surrealistic paintings are not altogether abstract. Practically every element is recognizable although the aggregate represents a patch-work quilt of emotions.

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HIS LATER WORKS

One of Labaudt's most recently completed works is that of the fresco, "Powell Street" on the staircase of the Coit Tower in San Francisco. On either wall of a narrow stairway, which winds upward from the first floor to the second, Lucien Labaudt has cleverly used the handrail to represent in his fresco, the sidewalk line of one of San Francisco's busy hillside streets. Labaudt's idea of treating the peculiar space is excellent.

FURNITURE AND DECORATIVE ARTS

Among Labaudt's recent endeavors is his designing of modern furniture and interior decoration. In this connection Labaudt puts form and functional design, interior "ensemble" and art objects into one artistic whole. Balance, contrast of color, line, form, and texture are the predominating ideas involved.

GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FRESCO

Next in line among Labaudt's recent accomplishments is that of the fresco "Advancement of Learning through the Printing Press". This decorative piece of work is one of the features of the new George Washington High School in San Francisco. The decoration, which is found on the east wall of the library, gives an expression of mankind's knowledge through the printed word. Labaudt has injected a favorable amount of intensity and expression into his panel, and added to that a very

complete and satisfying technique. Inside the library, Labaudt provided portraits of literary men, scientists, statesmen, and religious teachers, all grouped, with symbolic attributes, about the central figure of Gutenberg, patron saint of printed books.

Shortly before he executed this, Labaudt held his first one-man show in Southern California, at the Stanley Book Shop. The exhibition, which was held in 1934, consisted of ten still life, landscape, and figure pictures.

Of this group, one small painting of a female nude seated on the shore was given considerable attention and comment. A small upright figure of a bather in landscape and the horizontal picture of a nude lying in a shady wood, are pieces which showed Labaudt's highly developed plastic sense. He prefers the subtle harmony of few colors to the too usual discord of many. A Frenchman before he was a San Franciscan, he has the French restraint in the matter of color.

Included in this exhibition, was an imaginative piece, "Departure", which showed figures floating above a bay of ships, a drama of mood rather than action.

Lucien Labaudt is now actively engaged on a series of mural decorations at the Beach Chalet and Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. His designs, which have been approved by the San Francisco Art and Park Commission, and are being executed under the auspices of the W. P. A. Federal Art Project, will feature familiar San Francisco scenes; children playing in Park play-grounds, boats and ships in the bay, beach crowds,

Chinatown, and Fisherman's Wharf will be among the subjects, These will be composed within an area of nearly 1500 square feet. Labaudt explains that these murals are to be specifically painted so that people without an understanding of art may recognize and enjoy the subject matter whether or not they are moved by consideration of design.

LABAUDT WRITES A BOOK ON COLOR

Labaudt has made a profound study of color and devoted much of his time to the scientific study of the spectrum. In this connection, he is at the present time writing a book of color; the culmination of many years of constant research on systems of color as advanced by physicists and scientists. "This book, when finished, "Labaudt said, "will be primarily for students and artists." His retrospective exhibition of 1933 exemplified the varied evolution of his study of color. His work, although replete with traces of traditionary art, has something that is traceable only to the man who painted them. Labaudt is definitely in the class of the current French school of painting. His name is linked with the resounding names of Watteau, Cezanne, Chardin, Courbet, Braque, and a long list of others. His adventures in the realm of art parallel in most cases those of Piccaso, Braque, and Rouault, who also worked in studios as the scientist works in a laboratory.

Starting out as a designer early in life, he rose from that level to become a figure in the Fine Arts world and in the picturesque life of cosmopolitan San Francisco. Through his untiring efforts, he has gained national as well as international prominence as an artist and teacher. Although listed among the San Francisco artists as a painter, he calls himself a "constructor."

HIS MARRIAGE

Lucien Labaudt is married to Georgette Dubois, a designer, and also of French descent. They have two daughters, Alvyne and Yliane, who are also notable painters in their own capacities. On several occasions, the daughters have exhibited at the San Francisco Art Association and the Art Center.

Early in 1924, both girls went to Paris where they studied art under the French masters Andre Lhote, Otto Friez, and Roche. They studied art in Paris for six years after which time, they came back to San Francisco and started exhibiting some of their work.

Yliane Labaudt is noted for her Tahitian scenes, and Alvyne Labaudt for her San Francisco scenes. During the first season of the San Francisco Opera House, these talented young artists designed the stage sets for several popular modern operas.

LUCIEN LABAUDT, MAN AND PAINTER

About thirty years ago it would have been inconceivable, when Lucien Labaudt traced his footsteps from London to Nashville, and thence to San Francisco, that he would ultimately become a figure in the art world.

Having turned to fine art at a mature age, and being almost entirely self-taught, Labaudt has had tremendous obstacles to overcome. For this reason, his success is all the more remarkable. Known to most women, merely as a creator of fashions, favored by the "smart set" who order from him their "custom-built" gowns and wedding costumes, he is far more than a successful costumer; he is a very interesting personality. A talented painter, a modernist, full of optimism and enthusiasm, Labaudt's life is a continuous struggle to further the work he is doing. It is this boundless enthusiasm for these professed arts that has made him the able figure he is.

Labaudt as a man is sensitive and responsive to art currents of the day. He has gone through the whole evolution of modern art on his own before having had any close contact with the works of the various schools with which one might associate many of his canvases. He has worked chiefly under his own impulse. A strong emotional energy pervades his work as it develops through several phases of modernism to his more recent sketches.

As a pioneer and a leader in the modern movements of art in America, we find Labaudt looks into the future for new movements, new theories, new techniques, new mediums, to successfully make his own.

Costume designer, football player, teacher, impressionist, expressionist, cubist, futurist and surrealist: here is Lucien Labaudt; one who does full share to San Francisco and California and keeps brisk step with Paris in original design and color, novel methods and manners.

Labaudt's career is one of constant growth, new steps, new ideals, new mediums--fresh influences and impulses. The true artist's measurement is found in his endless experiment and real aesthetic expansion.

LUCIEN LABAUDT

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

The Bridge (1922)
L'Homme au Chapeau Gris
The Last Rose of Summer
Anesthesia
Portrait of Mdlle L.
Blossom Time
San Francisco
L'Oncle
516
Head of a Girl
Breakfast
Roofs
Belmont (Paramount Theatre, Oakland)
Presidio
Reclining Nude (Anne Bremer Prize, 1927),
San Francisco Association
Squashes and Fruits
Twenty-one
Still Life (Bread)
Still Life (Bottle and Cigarettes)
Brittany Landscape
Nude (Family Club)
Chrysanthemums
450 Sutter
8 A.M.
Factory
L'Atelier (Carnegie, 1931)
Salome
Skyscrapers
Redwood Trees
Fisherman's Daughter
Young Girl
At the Opera
Orchard, Rainy Day
On the Road to Half Moon Bay
Going to a Dance
Flower Carrier
Tiburon
Going to Church (Brittany)
Still Life (Tools)
Burlingame Hills
Summer Nude
Spring Nude

Autumn Nude
516 (1932)
Sister of Mercy
Justice
Spirit of Adventure
Going Away
Shrimp Cocktail
Poet and Indians
Pagliacci
The Siesta
After the Swim (No. 1)
After the Swim (No. 2)
Three Sisters
Morning Nude
Morning Nude (Seated)
Morning Group (No. 1)
Morning Group (No. 2)
Morning Nude (Back)
Kitchen Table
Wading
At the Beach
The Ranch
Lagunitas
The Bath Towel
Winter Orchard
Haystacks
Five O'Clock Tea
On the Way to Salada
Small Orchard
Three Heads
The Roofs (Bayshore)
Ploughed Earth
Flowers
Upon the Grass
Girl in Black

WORKS IN PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

The Poplars; South San Francisco; Freight Cars,--Roberts Manufacturing Company, San Francisco (purchased)
The Spirit of Adventure,--Dr. Leo Eloesser (purchased)
Shrimp Cocktail,--Exchange to Fujita
Pagliacci,--wedding present to Randolph
Morning Nude,--Mrs. Paul Beranger, Paris (purchased)
Morning Nude (seated),--William Gaw (gift)
Morning Group,--Mrs. Madeline Fujita (gift)

Morning Group,--Mrs. Charmian London (gift)
The Ranch,--Paul Verdier (purchased)
Winter Orchard,--Michael Weil (purchased)
The Hay Stacks,--Dr. Walter Heil (gift)
Flowers,--Paul Verdier (purchased)
Belmont,--Paramount Theatre, Oakland (bought)
Nude,--Timothy Pfleinger (purchased)
Three Heads,--Ina De Canm, Hollywood (gift)
Poet and Indians,--Colonel Charles Erskine Scott Wood (gift)

EXHIBITIONS:

Paris:
Salon Des Independants, 1921-22-23-24-25-26
Salon D'Automne, 1924-25-26
L'Ecole de Paris, 1928

New York:
Society of Independent Artists, 1922-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31

Pittsburg:
International Exhibition of the Carnegie Institute by Invitation, 1931, 1933, and 1935

San Francisco:
Represented in every Local Annual since 1920

Miscellaneous Cities:
Represented in exhibitions in Los Angeles, Hollywood, Oakland, and other cities along the Pacific Coast

AWARDS:

Awarded the Anne Bremer Prize, San Francisco 1927. First Prize at Gumps, First Annual Competitive Exhibition of oil paintings, San Francisco, 1932

CLUBS:

Member:
San Francisco Art Association
Art Center, San Francisco, California
Independent Artists of New York

LUCIEN LABAUDT

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November 11, 1934

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January 28, 1926

Argonaut, San Francisco, January 15, 1927

Wasp-News Letter, San Francisco, California
November 26, 1932

News Letter and the Wasp, San Francisco
October 19, 1935--December 7, 1935
July 11, 1936

American Art Annual, Vol. XXX, 1933

Personal Interview, May 1936

Lucien Labaudt's Scrap Book

O T I S O L D F I E L D

1890..... . . .

Biography and Works

"TELEGRAPH HILL"

PRIVATE COLLECTION OF JAMES D. PHELAN

INTRODUCTION

Otis Oldfield is an artist of unusual temperament. In his art as well as in his personality there is a curious combination of the practicability of a small-town American, and the gay abandon of a Parisian metropolite.

His various experiences abroad, where he lived and studied for sixteen years, combined with a distinctly American point of view, which he has never forsaken, provide him with a philosophy of art that has strongly influenced the younger artists of Northern California.

Otis Oldfield is an artist of free spirit, without being a radical. His convictions concerning art and life are broad, with a healthy respect for principle and that quality which he calls "honesty of purpose." He cannot be called a poetic, nor sentimentally dramatic artist. When there is poetry in his work it is that of homely American genre, and when drama is present, it is the drama of the American scene, both countryside and city rhythms. He portrays the rustic realism and the stark mechanical realism with equally strong brush control.

If this artist is ever considered sentimental, he is far from maudlin. If he deliberately selects sentimental subjects, he transfers them to canvas with directness and

simplicity so that the finished work becomes a purely subjective interpretation.

His recent landscapes are intensely American. They might be compared to those of Charles Burchfield, without Burchfield's self-conscious and intellectual effort. Oldfield's approach is easy and his feeling for typical American subject matter has resulted in many canvases and drawings that record today, without wishful statements, rationalization, romantic-embellishment or extraneous imposed moods.

Oldfield's still-life studies do not search the world for precious art objects, nor rare fabrics and textural beauty. His model may be only a humble kettle boiling on an old iron stove, portrayed in its natural state, its forms and tones stressed into his own interpretation of the theme, and the whole resolving into an exciting work of art.

As a painter and as a teacher he has his own carefully evolved convictions on art matters. His ability to organize a canvas, a mural, a drawing of any subject into a consistent statement of color, line, mass, tone, admirably focused and free from technical trickery, marks him as an artist of amazing accomplishment.

OTIS OLDFIELD

GENEALOGY

Otis Oldfield was born in Sacramento, California, July 3, 1890, the youngest of three children, in the family of William Baggley Oldfield and Lydia Burge Oldfield.

His father was employed by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, as a master coach painter. Although this profession has but little to do with the fine arts, it does require a great deal of patience and care, combined with ability in brush control. It is within reason therefore to assume that Otis may have inherited his father's talents along artistic lines.

EARLY LIFE

The young lad attended the Sacramento Public Schools and in High School, where he studied the thrilling history of his country, he resolved to follow in the footsteps of Benjamin Franklin, as a printer.

Upon graduation Otis quickly found work in a local print shop, where he worked for some time, learning the age-old craft of book-binding, and modern methods of printing. Growing weary of the tedious tasks of setting type and routine shop work, he suddenly left his employer to travel into the prairie wastes of Nevada. Here he found work on a ranch near Battle Mountain, where he milked cows, and made himself generally useful.

The time he spent amid the quiet surroundings of this country tended to deaden his former aspirations of becoming a printer. He soon began to appreciate the peaceful beauty of the hillsides, and the gorgeous sunset skies. There, too, he often sat on the rickety porch of the old ranchhouse, deep in meditation, in the soothing silence that fell over the valley after sunset.

The inborn seed of the artist slowly germinated in his daily contact with nature. He began to roughly sketch the everyday objects about him, and he discovered that he had a natural aptitude for drawing. Suddenly the spark of ambition, fanned by a hunger for knowledge, burst into flame within him, and a consuming desire to become an artist possessed him.

Laboring under the impression that he must travel to the art centers of the world for a true art training, Otis experienced a queer prank of fortune, which changed the entire course of his life. As he sat on the Post Office steps in the little town of Battle Mountain, he chanced to talk with a fireman of the Nevada Central Railroad. This man had at one time attended an Art School in San Francisco and the mental picture he painted fired the eager lad with a determination to earn the necessary money, so that he too might enter this Academy, and begin the training that was to prepare him for his lifelong devotion to art.

Leaving the solitudes of Battle Mountain he went to Missoula, Montana, where he worked for a while in the

Northern Pacific Lunch Room, washing dishes, serving over the counter, and later becoming second cook. He next obtained work as lunch boy on the Coeur d'Alene branch Railroad running into Wallace, Idaho.

Growing tired of the monotonous work, Oldfield ventured on into the wilds of the Idaho hills. Here he worked as a messboy in a rough and ready lumber camp, isolated from the outside world.

EARLY TRAINING

When Oldfield had saved a small amount of money, he left for the coast and arriving in Portland, Oregon, boarded the old steamer, "Rose City," bound for San Francisco. The trip, as he recalls it, was a thrilling adventure for a landlubber in his teens. The voyage was so rough and he was so seasick that he missed the excitement of the starboard railing being dashed to splinters by the howling gale.

Upon his arrival in San Francisco, he immediately sought out the private Art School conducted by Arthur Best, at Bush and Franklin Streets. His meager earnings in the North had netted him so little, that after six months study his funds were exhausted. To continue his art work Otis asked his classmates if anyone knew where he might find employment, and was referred to a Mr. McDermot, then manager of the old Argonaut Hotel on Fourth Street in San Francisco. Here he was given a position.

A large portion of this Hotel's clientele was made up of wealthy cattle men, and miners fresh from the gold fields of Alaska. Riches had come easily to these men, and "easy-come, easy-go" was their motto, as they threw money around like confetti. Five dollar tips were not unusual and the roomers were so generous that a bell-boy was glad to work without salary.

Leaving the Argonaut, Oldfield secured a job as hat checker in San Francisco's oldest beach resort, the Cliff House. This popular cafe was patronized by the elite of San Francisco, and celebrities from many lands were lured by its magnificent setting and the world renowned cuisine upon which its reputation was founded. One of his fondest memories is of the thrilling sight of the "Divine Sarah" sweeping majestically into the dining room.

Hat-checking in those days was a highly profitable occupation, and Oldfield recalls an incident on a New Year's Eve, when he raked up two hundred dollars from among the serpentine that littered the dance floor after the guests had departed.

Oldfield's art work under Arthur Best's guidance attained some degree of proficiency, and soon the eager student found himself day-dreaming of studio life in the Latin Quarter of Paris. Before long his idle dreams had become an obsession, and his all-consuming desire for breadth of learning came to a climax, when he packed his single suitcase, and

with his closely guarded savings boarded the liner "La Lorraine," bound for Europe.

STUDIES IN PARIS

Upon his arrival in Paris Oldfield entered the Academie Julien, an art institute of signal recognition, and the "alma mater" of many of California's most successful artists. Here the young student set himself to the strenuous task of learning a foreign language, and of adjusting himself to the strange ways of Parisian life.

The work, as well as the training in the Academy was vastly different from anything Otis had ever before attempted, and the technique taught by these European masters was difficult for him to absorb readily.

During his first six months of intensive study Oldfield worked in the classes of Tony Robert Fleury and Dechnaud in the Academy, and under Jules Pages and Georges Rochgrosse at odd times. At the end of his first semester in November 1911, his sketch, which is required as one test of an examination, was given third mention in his class. Dechnaud urged Oldfield to reproduce his sketch on canvas for exhibition purposes, but Otis, not wishing to follow Dechnaud's methods of technique, refused to do so.

In the month that followed Oldfield left the Academie Julien, and along with several of his classmates, whose ideals concerning art were in agreement with his, decided to become a free lance artist and to open an independent studio.

This little group, namely: Luce, Marcel Roche, Andre Digannte, and Oldfield, considered themselves rebels against the academic training of the school, and chose to produce work of their individual conceptions. The modernisms of a coming art generation were being brought to light in the studios of many Parisian artists, and the battles that raged between the followers of the academic school and the devotees of the newly born "isms" became an important part of Oldfield's art education. During these formative years in Paris his work reflected every change that made itself evident in the world of art. He knew the philosophy of impressionism, cubism, futurism as well as neo-classicism, dada-ism and the cults, but he kept on being Oldfield. The first attempt to show his work at an exhibition met with failure, when his canvases were refused admittance to the Salon des Humoristes, which was the first anti-academic gallery to open in 1912.

FIRST EXHIBITION

In November 1912 Oldfield had his first painting accepted at the opening of the Salon des Independants. He named his little canvas "La Poele" (The Frying Pan). It was a black frying pan sitting upon an old fashioned oil stove and was purchased for two hundred francs, (about forty-dollars) by a stranger who visited the gallery. In later years the purchaser became a close friend and advisor to Oldfield, and when the latter returned to America this canvas was given to him as a token of esteem. The artist still prizes the painting among his effects.

Following his first Salon showing in Paris, Otis spent many months on a painting trip to the Isle of Brehat off the Coast of France. Here amid the picturesque settings of a colorful community he produced twenty canvases, which he brought back to Paris, when he returned in the early fall of 1913.

Otis now learned of a Mlle. Mayoux who used a section of her living quarters in Paris to exhibit art work by more-or-less unknown artists, who had thus far been unable to have their work shown in the larger galleries. She readily accepted Otis' Brehat group and proceeded at once to display them.

As Mlle. Mayoux was known as a discoverer of talent, her gallery often drew the attention of recognized artists in search of painters less fortunate than themselves, to whom they might render assistance. Durien and Zuloaga were two of such successful, recognized men who visited her tiny gallery. They became interested in Oldfield and his paintings and through their friendship his work was introduced to the Salon d'Automne.

WAR SERVICE

Oldfield had scarcely begun to make his first real progress as a free lance when the outbreak of the World War brought his labors to an abrupt close. Living in Paris at the time, he immediately enlisted as an interpreter in the

Fifth Corps (French) and was soon sent with his regiment into Belgium, where he saw heavy fighting.

Because of his small size he was often sent out into no-man's-land, with a canary in a tiny cage, to signal the presence of a gas attack from the German side. His stories of war experiences are vivid, but he rarely recounts them. He was among the first to receive the French War Cross for bravery.

POST WAR EXHIBITIONS

After serving four years in the war Otis returned to Paris and reopened his studio. Early in 1919 it was proposed by the French Government that a huge war memorial, to be called the Temple of Victory be built somewhere near the Marne, as an everlasting tribute to the soldier dead. The edifice was to occupy several acres of ground and to be three hundred feet high. The entrance was to be so constructed as to typify power in action, and the interior to be embellished with stained-glass windows, in a temple effect. Oldfield was selected as the only American to serve on the committee which had charge of the proposed project. Though this monument was never built, Oldfield's appointment to the committee was a compliment paid him by the French Government.

In the Fall of 1919 four of the artist's drawings were accepted at the Salon d'Automne, two of which were entitled, "Woman on Sofa," and the other, "Mills."

In the Salon d'Automne show of 1921, he received his first press recognition on the painting he exhibited there, namely, "Still-Life," and "Man with the Orange."

G. De Laix, art critic for the Petit Bleu, a local art periodical, offered the initial criticism of Oldfield's work on the same show. St. Etienne, art critic of the Tribune Republican, said of his art:

> "There are good things in his trial, but the drawing is not pushed far enough, and one feels too much that the artist has been satisfied with a sketchiness which he feared to spoil by digging deeper. Too bad."

Early in 1922, Oldfield went on another painting trip, this time to Normandy, where he painted a series of pictures of this truly romantic section of France. Mlle. Mayoux was again his sponsor, when he exhibited these canvases in Paris a few months later.

Also through her efforts, one of his paintings was sent to Japan to be shown in a small advanced gallery.

Oldfield now exhibited regularly at both the Salon des Independants and the Salon D'Automne, at which galleries his work was receiving encouraging comment each year.

The New York Herald of Paris, in 1922, gave him press mention for his work at the d'Automne Gallery. He titled his four oils, "La Paysanne," "L'Homme a la Meule," "Still-Life with Books," and "Still-Life with Gourds." This newspaper commented on the American:

> "Otis Oldfield of Sacramento has some striking figure studies in original poses."

Without solicitation, Thiebault-Sisson, recognized as the outstanding art critic in Paris, gave Oldfield's 1922 show mention in his column in the Paris Times. He said:

> "The Woman with the Basket, La Paysanne, that the American Oldfield shows us, is a momentous landscape, and the execution is very solid."

Though it would seem that Thiebault-Sisson's remarks concerning Oldfield's work were not necessarily of great praise, the mere mention by this dean of all Parisian critics brought forth Oldfield's immediate recognition. The days that followed found press notices doing him credit in many newspapers, both Parisian and American. Such brief bits as follow are large recognition in an art world of 40,000 artists, as existed in Paris then.

Among them, Parslow, art critic of the Chicago Tribune wrote:

> "....Oldfield has some capital peasant figures and still life studies."

In the Journal du Peuple, of Paris, M. Gybal remarked that:

> "....Oldfield's peasant reveals a spiritual conviction."

La Proue, art critic on the Echo Nationale, wrote:

> "....A peasant by Oldfield has been painted with enthusiasm."

In the Petit Giroude, critic Roenard gave aesthetic appreciation to Oldfield's peasant.

Again in 1923 Oldfield's work received much favorable mention by the Paris art critics. Particularly on his "Bohemienne," Thiebault-Sisson wrote in the Paris Times:

> "The American Oldfield has the temperament of a draughtsman which hardens his figure of the peasant, but does not hurt the accents of his still-life."

In the Crapouillot of Paris, critic Rey, offered this mention:

> "The Bohemian of Oldfield talks of drastic things."

Crokowska, critic of the Art News of Paris, wrote:

> "Otis Oldfield is a first class representative of the American contingent."

The Chicago Tribune again called special notice to Oldfield's work, in which it remarked:

> "Otis Oldfield has a large painting of a patron of a street fair rolling kitchen; she has a somewhat worried look under a bushy mass of bobbed hair."

Oldfield's outstanding contributions to the 1923 Salon des Independants were "La Peruvienne," a figure study of a charming Senorita, and a canvas entitled "Still-Life with a Crockery Pot." Of "La Peruvienne" the Argus des Salons, Paris, remarked:

> "Pray for the Caballero that this Senorita waits for."

The Chicago Tribune again carried comment by critic Sawyer; he said:

"Oldfield has a painting of a Peruvian, very well carried out, although one would rather have seen the model in a gentler mood."

PYRENEES EXHIBITION

At the close of the Paris Salons in 1923, Oldfield left on an extended visit to the Pyrenees where he sketched and studied that rugged country, with its primitive people. So unique and successful were his paintings that in the winter of 1923, the Panardi Galleries on the Rue Bonaparte, Paris, commissioned him to paint a collection of "Naturalism," with a minimum of twenty-five canvases for a special exhibition scheduled for November 1924.

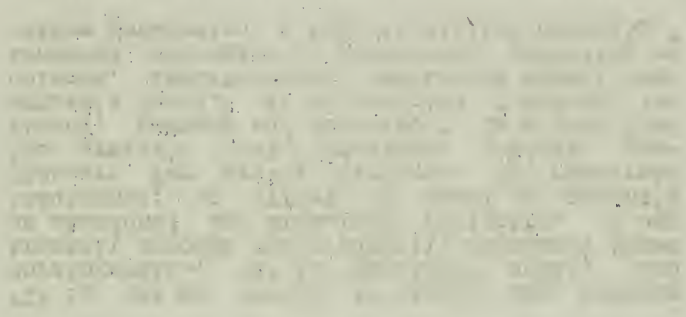
To maintain his reputation for originality, he chose for his subjects in this series, scenes in the quaint Bearn country of the Pyrenees Mountains on the Spanish frontier, a vicinity heretofore unrecorded by artists. In the isolated town of Pontacq he settled down to the task of picturing the humble villagers, as they went about their daily labors. In an artistic sense, the portraits Oldfield succeeded in painting were fine pieces, but as for beauty of subject, they were frankly alarming. One would not care to be accosted by some of those who served as models, were there not protective gendarmes handy. One "charming gentleman" of the town greeted Oldfield with a shotgun when the artist solicited his services as a model, while another, Antonio, self-styled "champion drinker" of Pontacq, posed willingly enough but he insisted

that the bottle painted beside him be pictured as empty, for Antonio always drinks his liquor to the last drop.

Along with his amusing and interesting character studies, he also painted many landscape scenes in and around the frontier village. His paintings were intentionally documentary, being a fine record of a once splendid town fallen into decay morally and physically. So that his efforts would be understood and appreciated, Oldfield gave a thorough explanation of his art when he said:

> "It is not my desire to simply map curious physiognomies, but to penetrate souls, and transmit through this a pathetic sentiment toward an abandoned and disdained rusticity. I ask indulgence; an effort to expel a moment's pleasure for pretty pictures, to penetrate the artist's real intention, subject, sentiment, harmony and technique; in a word 'The Artist's Ideal." It is a record of natural indolence, indifference, sufficient animal contentment, and material pleasures, affecting an entire population, a page of pitiful humanity."

Following his significant success in the Pyrenees Exhibition, Oldfield returned to his old haunts in the Latin quarter of Paris. Sketching the drab days, gay night life, and many nationalities of the district was a favorite hobby with him. One of the most remarkable of his creations he entitled, "Man with Dog," which he placed on exhibition at the spring show at the Salon des Independants in 1924.



Sawyer, critic of the Chicago Tribune, Paris edition, once again commented:

> "Otis Oldfield has a man whittling a stick, done with facility."

The New York Herald, Paris edition, on the same occasion remarked:

> "Mr. Oldfield's 'Man with Dog,' is a simple, expressive portrait."

Other periodicals giving favorable mention of this painting were "Echo Nationale," "Comoedia," "Bon Soir," and "Journal"; all Parisian publications.

He never again undertook an exacting course in painting; neither did he attempt to copy the old masters, as do so many students. Instead he created a personal style, that became more and more evident in his later works.

By the time he left Paris for America he was considered a master of genre, portrait, and landscape painting. He could compose an interesting theme on anything he found. He had now come to the attention of the most important European art critics and had received their wholehearted approval which resulted in plentiful art patronage.

RETURN TO AMERICA

In September 1924, Oldfield sailed for New York City on the Leviathan. Arriving in the eastern metropolis, he proceeded at once to California.

Sixteen years spent in France had all but transformed him into a Frenchman in appearance, as well as in art theory. He seemed almost a foreigner to his former friends, and readjustment to American ways came slowly and with great difficulty.

Settling in San Francisco, Oldfield became a leading member of the local art colony. His European works, unusual in theme and technique, stimulated his American friends and his impact on San Francisco's art was noticeable. With a broad knowledge of art theory, he had experimented with and absorbed the varied teachings of the current European art schools. He accepted what he believed to be of value from impressionism, cubism, futurism, and the other advanced "isms" of modern art. He had mellowed his art interpretations with a thorough study of the classic and the conventional. His work therefore is not a product of any particular school of thought, but a satisfying mingling of realism and idealism. His application of theory may best be appreciated in his unerring ability to transform a simple everyday object, into a thing of glowing beauty.

FIRST AMERICAN EXHIBITION

The collection of paintings which Oldfield brought from abroad were first shown in 1925 at the Galerie Beaux Arts in San Francisco, under the sponsorship of Beatrice Judd Ryan, director of that co-operative artists' club. The local criticisms springing from this exhibition were good, bad, and

some even ridiculed him. His drastic style upset the local art colony, who were still doubtful of so-called "decadent" European trends. The San Francisco Chronicle of December 12, 1925 commented:

> "Otis Oldfield, a California Frenchman, came back to San Francisco last week, after an absence of 16 years, and has an interesting collection of Beaux Arts. Oldfield's work is typically French and with his association with the peasants and shepherds in the Pyrenees, he is almost as foreign as his school. Yet, he says, he finds California artists have kept pace with the European.
>
> "Oldfield is traveling along the road that leads to the future of art."

Junius Cravens wrote in the San Francisco Argonaut of December 11, 1925 of Oldfield's "frames and paintings:"

> "At the Beaux Arts, the untrammeled soul of the modern, seeking to be free, chafes at its picture frame. Otis Oldfield revolts against the banality of boughten gilt, and plunges into mediocrity of home made--what have you! He finds he cannot express himself within the meagre confines of his canvas, but needs must ooze out over the so-called frame or what he invents to serve as such, applying applied art to fine objects and merging them into an indivisible whole. And why not? It is an excellent means of getting rid of old hat-racks, sideboards and what-nots; an outlet for whatever happens to be left over from rummage sales.
>
> "Quite a secondary objection to Mr. Oldfield's applied art is that his versatility in adopting odds and ends of nothing at all, intrigues one's interest more than does what the frame contains! The first objection might be to the unbelievable bad taste of the total result, aided and abetted as it is, by a hit or miss application of paint--to the frame, we mean. At present, we cannot imagine asking for instance, 'Have you a little Oldfield in your house?' for the negative answer would precede

> the question. We are still referring to frames. But, come to think of it, the frames contained alleged paintings.
>
> "Mr. Oldfield's method of applying paint to canvas is anything but hit or miss. It is a laying on of neatly precise triangles, fitted together, like a jig-saw puzzle--and as hard to hold together, if the frames are indicative. Constructively, (not referring now to carpentry) he is doubtless contributing a great deal to students of contemporary painting. Some of his paintings even have a modicum of charm. However, they are framed theories and problems, academic to a degree. There is no question he is an interesting, perhaps even an important painter. It is, therefore, doubly regrettable that he should feel the need of resorting to such an affectation as 'trick' frames, which not only detract from what he has to express, but emphasize his limitations."

Following his local debut, Oldfield was offered a position as feature artist on the San Francisco Call, which he accepted.

ART CLASSES

About a year after his return from France, when Oldfield resigned from the art staff of the San Francisco Call, he accepted a professorship in the California School of Fine Arts. From the very beginning of his career as an instructor, he insisted on a personalized art. He had very definite convictions on art training, and as a result his classes were crowded with eager students. They were confident that study under an instructor of such broad experience and complete comprehension would bring them to new horizons of art technique and accomplishment.

His main objective, which he never lost sight of in teaching, was not to merely manufacture commonplace artists in given steps of training, but rather to educate the eye, and bring forth latent talents. After a short period of study in Oldfield's classes, his pupils gave an interesting exhibition at the Paul Elder Gallery in San Francisco. The show consisted entirely of studies done under Oldfield's new program of color-zoning, and reorganization of a surface into rhythm.

OLDFIELD'S TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

To explain the work displayed and also to clarify his personal methods of instruction, Oldfield wrote the following thesis:

> "The art of pure painting so well defined, since impressionism has gradually entered our modern minds, as the vehicle of emotion most akin to our present mode of life. Painting, as all else, is governed by a law, the law of simultaneous contrast of color and the rapport of contrasted objects. It is the preparation of the student in form of ocular drill, enabling him to acquire a healthier and more spontaneous comprehension of the physical side of art which assuredly is the basis of expression. Its foundation compares to the direct-cut in the stone of the sculptor; for the eye searches only to define and delineate the nebulous color zones composing Nature's manner of revealing life by contrast and construction for color is life and therein lies the problem.
>
> "In the twenty-four specimens representing two months work with this system, are a variety of temperaments and nationalities. There were children, teachers, doctors, farm lads--people quite remote from each other from an intellectual, physical and social consideration. They mutually worked, interpreting themselves freely by the aid of the 'Machine' of zones and surely there was no attempt to manufacture an artist, but to aid in the use of a tool, to stimulate enthusiasm and to encourage faith."

"COLOR ZONES"

"There are but two virtues that can cause art outside of the 'machine': Faith and love of the Natural. These, however, are not the preoccupation of an instructor. They must arise from the unlimited diversity of one's self, of which there is desire to manifest and express by means of color, and it is that, the expression, which was the sole instrument of instruction. The program was confined to color-zones, organization of a surface and rhythm. The students enjoyed the freedom of choice, even adding or subtracting portions of the subject. That was their business, their personal taste, which was scrupulously respected, as was the choice of color. The application, being the trade part, was rigorously disciplined. Work was executed upon paper, and the pigments were spread across the top. Palettes and their abusive mixings were eliminated, and students painted directly by zones methodically constructed in juxtaposition from the nucleus key-tone without preliminary sketch, and in pure color only. Cleverness and petty effects were automatically abolished by the stubborn surface of absorbing paper, necessitating a new application at each stroke to the quickly dried matter. Excellent results were obtained without exception, and a real foundation for a healthy start in any desired branch of painting."

GOLD MEDAL AWARD

At the forty-eighth Annual San Francisco Art Association Exhibit held in May 1925, Oldfield won the Gold Medal Award for graphic arts on his drawing of the "Knife Grinder."

OLDFIELD MARRIES

On the thirtieth of November 1926, Oldfield married one of his talented students, Miss Helen Clark, who is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Edgar Clark, of Oakland, California.

The wedding did credit to the originality of Bohemia, from the moment the guests entered the studio of his friend, Ralph Stackpole, until the last strains of the dance music faded into the night. The ceremony took place in the stone-cutting yard behind sculptor Stackpole's studio. There were huge pans of fire mounted on the tops of the surrounding walls which flared against a clear night sky. Undaunted by the chill of the November evening fog, a large group of friends gathered from the realm of art to witness the event. The bride was attended by Miss Lucille Duff, while Ralph Stackpole served as best man. A rough slab of wood set between half-hewn sculptures served as the unique altar before which the Rev. Henry Ohloff pronounced the marriage vows.

The Oldfields then began studio life in the famous old building at 628 Montgomery Street, in the heart of San Francisco's Latin quarter, where both artistic and political history have been made.

Later they moved to Telegraph Hill, where from the broad windows of his studio home, Oldfield surveys the busy scene below him. Countless subjects of artistic value to him, daily pass before his eyes. Quaint Italian types, happy children at play, a tramp steamer gliding lazily on the bay--all these things he sketches just as they impress him, forming a living part of the historic San Francisco Bay landmark that is Telegraph Hill.

"TELEGRAPH HILL"

In the November 1927 exhibit of the Galerie Beaux Arts in San Francisco, Oldfield displayed his varied interpretations of San Francisco's Bohemia.

"Telegraph Hill," one of the artist's best efforts was voted the outstanding canvas of the show. In this colorful landscape the artist portrays the east slope of the hill in bright, clear tones. His treatment of the scene bears definite proof of Oldfield's individuality of perception and expression.

Jehanne Bietry Salinger, art critic of the San Francisco Examiner, after viewing the show, offered the following comment in the November 6, 1927 issue of that newspaper:

> "....It is not a sketch; neither is it a picture made from Nature in two or three days. It is the result of years of observation, of a genuine and sympathetic understanding of this famous San Francisco landmark, of a true love of it, and of no less than five months of actual work. It is the most remarkable painting that Oldfield has yet produced. It may be that it will prove to be one of the outstanding American pictures of this year, and perhaps some time to come. Long after Telegraph Hill may have disappeared from the life of San Francisco this painting will remain as a poetical and historic document. It is more than a graphic work of art, it is a true masterpiece of plastic painting.
>
> "Oldfield does not pretend to have accomplished this easily, and he does not hesitate to tell of the hours of labor which it took him to work out the initial plans as complete and as accurate as a city planning engineer. Its charm and romantic appeal are derived from the figures, and from its beautiful colors. While in the foreground, goats, the symbolical animals of Telegraph Hill, which represent all the temperament and independent spirit of the dwellers,

are seen galloping over the hill, the background is made of the Bay, over which many boats are crossing."

Senator James D. Phelan, distinguished Californian and millionaire patron of the arts, purchased the painting, and placed it in his private collection, where it hangs beside the works of other outstanding California artists.

Sixteen smaller canvases done in Owens River Valley were also shown, among which special notice was given to "Oasis," "Wild Grasses," and "A Confetti of Cottonwood." This group represented the fruits of a leisurely painting jaunt through the Mojave Desert Colony. Oldfield and his wife spent the entire summer of 1927, sketching and painting in the open and camping where they might, producing about twenty canvases. Mrs. Oldfield herself is an artist of no mean ability and painted beside her husband on the trip, though she has forsaken the brush and palette, to devote her efforts to rearing her two daughters Rhoda and Jane.

CREATION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO ART CENTER

In the 1928 Spring semester at the California School of Fine Arts there was enrolled a Chinese student named Yun. Oldfield became interested in him and sought to train the oriental mind in occidental ways of art. At the vacation season, the two decided upon a painting tour through the Mother Lode Country to portray this picturesque section modernistically, a thing completely foreign to Yun's Celestial background and training.

Later he invited Yun to join with other young moderns and exhibit their work in a gallery of their own creation. The sculptor, Stackpole, gladly consented to donate the use of a vacant studio room to be used for this purpose.

From the famed 628 Montgomery block, where a coterie of young artists had established their studios, Oldfield and Yun gathered together the original band of ten to form the nucleus of the Modern Gallery. Don Work, Marion Trace, Julius Pommer, Ward Montague, Rosalie Maus, Parker Hall, Ruth Cravath, Dorr Bothwell, Frank Dunham, and Yun exhibited in the opening show. It was later arranged that each of the ten should be allowed to hold a "One-man show," at given times with complete freedom. Soon the project outgrew its quarters, and a twofold result of this original grouping manifested itself in the ultimate formation of what is now the San Francisco Art Center, and the creation by Yun some time later, of a distinctly oriental current art gallery in the chinese quarter of San Francisco.

A portrait of Yun, produced by Oldfield, was criticized in the Argus of July 1927:

> "The portrait of Yun' by Otis· Oldfield is an excellent canvas from the standpoint of color, proportion, depth and perspective, but it does not show the genuine young Chinese painter as most people know him. It represents him as a mature and stern man, which is a respectable viewpoint, but an altogether different conception to that which most persons who know Yun have of this young artist."

EASTERN RECOGNITION

Late in 1928, Mr. Charles Pepper of the Boston Art Club visited San Francisco and was greatly impressed by the work of local artists. He selected a group of painters from whom he requested a collection of canvases, to be shown in Boston, Oldfield being one of the number. In the same year Oldfield, for the third consecutive season, held a one-man show at the San Francisco Galerie Beaux Arts. At this time the noted eastern painter, Walter Kuhn, arrived in San Francisco and planned to display his work at the same gallery.

Seeking art work typical of San Francisco and the Bay area, Kuhn inquired of Ralph Stackpole and Ottorino Ronchi where he might find such work. The two artists being great admirers of Oldfield directed Kuhn to the Oldfield studio high up on Telegraph Hill. Negotiating the laborious climb to the hill crest, Kuhn came upon the artist gazing intently through a hand telescope, making mental notes of a vessel entering the Bay.

The eastern artist found Oldfield's work excellent and envisioned a bright future for him. When Kuhn left for New York City he took a collection of about twelve canvases, to display as representative San Francisco art work. So sincere was Kuhn's enthusiasm over the Californian's art that, even before the opening of the scheduled exhibition, the eastern artist had sold every piece from his studio walls.

Through this introduction into New York art circles, Oldfield was invited to send a new series of California paintings to be exhibited in a one-man show at the Montrose Gallery of New York, in 1929. In reply he forwarded a series of impressionistic canvases in water-color, dealing with scenes characteristic of his hilltop retreat. "The Kids," a character study typical of the artist's environment, was given high praise, and the entire exhibition received excellent comment.

In the New York Times of December 1, 1929, Miss Ruth Green Harris, a writer, gave the following criticism on the show:

> "'Hail to the sweet personal charm each place has to offer,' says Oldfield, who writes a long legend on the back of all his painting. Mr. Montrose, director of the Gallery, tells us many of Oldfield's pictures are made from his window. He has discovered the personal charm of the place. The water under the ships seems to be colored by its own depths and by reflections from the boats and sky, rather than by any artificial pigment. Though the drawings are not restless, they describe busy scenes crisply. The enjoyable element in his work springs from his lively spontaneous observance of everyday life adjacent to his seat of operation on the cluttered slopes of San Francisco's famous Telegraph Hill."

In the spring of 1930 Oldfield made a leisurely trip up the Sacramento River aboard the old sternwheeler, Dover. During this painting jaunt he produced a number of excellent canvases, depicting the picturesque boats which ply the river, vistas of rural beauty, and scenes of bustle and confusion which greet the eye on the tiny wharves along the river's edge. These

canvases were shown in New York City, later in 1930, in a second one-man show at the Montrose Gallery.

In December 1930 Oldfield held his third New York exhibition. At the Montrose Gallery there was another one-man show, and at the Marie Harriman Gallery a joint exhibition with John Allison, who was making his initial exhibit in that city.

The paintings displayed at Harriman's were of an earlier period and closely resembled the work shown by Mr. Montrose in Oldfield's New York debut. The Montrose Gallery show consisted of a varied collection of Oldfield's most recent work. This comparison between his earlier and later efforts invited more than usual criticism among New York art critics.

Mr. Edward Alden Jewell of the New York Times, expressed himself as follows:

> "The more recent paintings at the Montrose Galleries proceed at a slower pace. The line itself is less salient and compositions have acquired a softer texture. This would seem a transition period for Mr. Oldfield. But the augury is favorable, for whatever may be sacrificed in the way of vivid first hand impression is balanced by a deepening vitality in the painting itself."

OLDFIELD RETURNS HOME

Upon his return from the East, where he had attended his recent exhibitions, Oldfield again placed his work on display at the Galerie Beaux Arts in San Francisco. The collection included twenty oil paintings and twenty-five water-col-

ors. Among the oils shown were a series of farm scenes which he called "A Little Country Promenade." These he executed during a visit to a Sonoma County ranch. The water-colors dealt mainly with marine scenes in and around the San Francisco Bay area.

"ALASKA ON A WINDJAMMER"

The stately ships, which slip silently through the Golden Gate bound for foreign ports, or make harbor at nearby piers, fascinated Oldfield.

In leisure moments he often strolled along the bustling waterfront, eagerly observing romantic vessels of all shapes and sizes which lay at their moorings. For Oldfield the old fashioned sailing ships held a particular charm. When the three masted schooner, "Louise," made port, he boarded her to talk with the Captain. Just in from a northern run, her hold was filled to capacity with a record catch of Alaska Cod. The simple life of a "Codfisher," as the sailors who manned such ships were called, intrigued the artist's imagination so much that he decided to paint a series of canvases, depicting the exciting exploits of these quaint fisher folk. With permission from the master of the "Louise," Oldfield in March 1931 sailed on her long northern cruise extending to Dutch Harbor, Alaska. This trip proved to be the inspiration for a series of water-colors to which he gave the general title "Alaska on a Windjammer." Oldfield tells of his sketches:

> "My idea in painting this series was to give a sincere journalistic representation of the men who work at sea. I purposely refrained from calling them sailors, although as a matter of fact they are deep-sea salts. But since in addition to their profession they have adopted another one, that of a codfishman, they are in a class by themselves. 'Honest journalism in pictures'--that's what I try to put into my paintings. I haven't tried any fancy artistic tricks, no freak experiments in modernism are there. It's the story as I heard and saw it. I should scarcely call them water-colors but rather drawings in what happens to be water-color. To me they are done in the same manner one does black and white."

When the artist returned home after several months in Alaskan waters, he set to work finishing up his studies. The first showing of his "Windjammer Series," was held at the Galerie Beaux Arts and a reception was held in his honor, where the artist related his recent experiences. A second exhibit was hung in the Art Center.

Nadia Lavrova, art critic, wrote the following article in a local publication, concerning this exhibit:

> "Technique is evident in all Oldfield's work. But it does not detract from the beauty of the colors he has employed. One of the finest is called 'Helm at Night.' The figure of a man at the wheel, his face lighted up from the instruments below him, is strikingly and strongly drawn. Several others show the crew at work. In them the rhythm of the lines, the billowing of the sails, the clothes of the men, show the innate ability of the artist. The water-colors distill a convincing, thoughtful atmosphere, reproducing in a plastic and pictorial way the world on board a windjammer. Their colors harmonizing with subject attain at times the tenseness of black and white."

Included in the group with "Helm at Night," were "Reefing the Main," "Spanker Halyard," "All hands on Deck in a Storm," "Spanker Sheet," "The Mate," and "The Mess Room."

GRUEN STUDIO SHOW

The next local showing of Oldfield's art was on April 25, 1931 in the Gruen Studio of San Francisco. Included in this display was a group of "hill folk" studies done in his typical impressionistic style. Two portraits agumented the exhibit, a self-portrait, and one of Miss Helen Horst, now the wife of Moya del Pino, the San Francisco artist.

The San Francisco Wasp-News Letter of April 25, 1931, commented as follows:

> "Although this group includes a few main studies, most of the paintings belong to the artist's 'Hill Fold' group, and include the colorful types he has observed on Telegraph Hill, where he has his studio, sketched against a fascinating background of flapping wash and prankish goats, the casual shanties and ragged eucalyptus trees so characteristic of the storied tatterdemalion Olympus. Admirable in drawing and satisfying in color, these are little classics of character and background."

SAN FRANCISCO STOCK EXCHANGE COMMISSION

In the same year the San Francisco Stock Exchange Lunch Club Rooms were decorated byoutstanding artists. Diego Rivera, the world famed Mexican Master, painted the fresco murals; Ralph Stackpole was represented by sculpture work; Robert Howard furnished exquisite wood carving; and Otis

Oldfield decorated the Tap Room windows. It was first intended to install four stained glass windows which were to be designed by Oldfield, but the artist decided to paint them, to reduce loss of light and to better carry out his plan of action. The theme he chose had to do with four types of bankers, whom he pictured hunting wild game, each using tactics characteristic of their respective daily business life and dealings. There was the hard boiled banker, stalking the grizzly bear, intent upon bagging big game. The more refined financier hunting deer. The Nature lover, with his splendid setter, and fine game bag peacefully seeking quail. The fourth window depicts the easy going banker who lays in wait in a duck blind, for the unwary fowl to fly within range.

SACRAMENTO STATE FAIR EXHIBITION

At the September 1933 Sacramento Art Fair, Oldfield exhibited a startling canvas entitled "Figure," which became the sensation of the show, and over which violent criticism raged.

The San Francisco Chronicle of September 11, 1933, states:

> "Figures may make art, and nudeness add to beauty, while on the other hand just a few clothes may spoil the public's taste for what is otherwise a wonderful piece of work.
>
> "This seems to be the situation in regard to the first prize award at the State Fair in Sacramento. The award was made to Otis Oldfield, San Francisco artist, for a painting

> called 'Figure,' showing a woman in a state of dishabille except for a pair of 'shorts,' back to her audience, musing over a washbowl. The judges selected the piece for its exceptional technique of figure, but, judging from the number of protests received, the public indicated they thought the lady should have more clothes on, although they made no objection to the technique.
>
> "'Maybe if she hadn't on the shorts, they might like it better,' said one critic. Perhaps that one little garment spoils their sense of beauty.'"

The canvas shows a full length figure of a girl back view, dressed in the briefest of lingerie and wearing red mules. The golden flesh tones are set off by a deep green background, the most conspicuous part of the painting being the flimsy garment she is wearing.

Of his particular interest in figure work Oldfield says:

> "In recent years I have chosen above all other subjects, the human figure, because flesh retains color, and lends more emotion to color relations. The human figure in painting lends a quality of mystery, and without mystery, there is no art."

COIT TOWER MURALS

In 1932 the Coit Memorial Tower was erected on Telegraph Hill in San Francisco from a $125,000 bequest left by Mrs. Lillian Hitchcock Coit, prominent San Franciscan. Upon completion of the structure it was decided that the inner walls should be decorated with a series of murals depicting

California scenes, and that the artists should be Californians. The call was sent out for local muralists to decorate the great walls and forty-six artists were soon at work in the new tower. The work when completed in May 1934 formed a pictorial history of California from the earliest days of the Golden State to the present time. One of the most striking murals executed was Oldfield's contribution to this splendid series. It is a harbor scene in which many ships are viewed at some distance; the central theme is the new luxury liner, the "Santa Rosa."

SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL EXHIBIT

At the opening show of the new San Francisco Museum of Art, in the War Memorial Building, Oldfield's "Codfisher," a shimmering blue-gray study of a fishing boat, won the popularity prize of the show. An old four-masted schooner, moored at a San Francisco wharf, is viewed against a delicate blue background. The entire treatment of the subject definitely establishes his fidelity to honest interpretation of subject matter, with the addition of sound construction and color appeal.

Howard Talbot of the Wasp-News Letter of February 23, 1935, said:

> "The good gray painting of the 'Codfisher,' Otis Oldfield's picture of the deep sea schooner, claimed votes from the crowds that jammed the San Francisco Art Association Annual Museum of Art, in sufficient numbers to draw down the popularity prize of one hundred dollars. This artist loves boats as ardently as the storied captain hates the sea and his affliction is patently contagious."

At the San Francisco Art Center display in the Autumn of 1935, Oldfield hung a portrait entitled "Two Heads," which evoked varied opinions among art critics.

Jehanne Bietry Salinger, art critic for the Wasp-News Letter, wrote in an October 1935 issue:

> "Otis Oldfield has a good portrait, 'Two Heads.' It is, however, too stern and wanting in freedom and ease."

The San Francisco Examiner commented:

> "Last of the honored paintings is Oldfield's 'Codfisher,' which won a popularity prize vote. My vote should go far sooner to his 'Two Heads.'"

The San Francisco Chronicle offered another opinion:

> "In his head studies, Oldfield has been rather pitiless, using the planes of cheek, nose, and chin for the composition of form built up without regard to prettiness. However, one of the finest things in the exhibition is the head of a woman done without compromise. The face shows a strong beauty that has a lasting quality."

During the latter part of 1936 Oldfield exhibited frequently in and around San Francisco. Two major showings were those at the White House Gallery and the San Francisco Woman's City Club. The most prominent works displayed were lithographs of the New San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, among which were several particularly stirring action studies of the bridge workmen going about their perilous labors. These drew highly favorable comment from both critics and the public.

At this writing in May 1937, Oldfield is exhibiting at the fifty-seventh Annual Art Association Show in San Francisco, in which "Louise Departs," and "Painting of a Dress," are the outstanding canvases.

CONCLUSION

Otis Oldfield possesses the traditional temperament of an artist and the outward appearance as well. A French beret always worn jauntily on his head, small of stature and swift of movement, he attracts attention wherever he goes because of a certain foreign quality stamped into his character by his many years abroad. These years in France during which he studied, starved, experimented, and experienced both art and war have broadened his outlook immensely. His struggles as an art student are appreciated by his loyal and adoring pupils, and among his friends Oldfield is sincerely beloved.

"I like to think of myself as an American artist," says Oldfield. "The Parisians told me that, though I lived among them for so many years, I always remained something of a California savage. Be that as it may, the American artist in general, as he differs from the European artist in general, has certain distinguishing earmarks. The American has no historic traditions either to hamper or to guide him. The Frenchman travels by reaching his destination, the American travels by traveling. The Frenchman loves the effect of Nature, the

American loves nature herself. The Frenchman drinks wine for its bouquet, the American for its alcholic results."

Oldfield is sufficiently experienced in the vagaries of art and art movements so that when he compares national capacities, he speaks with authority. He says, "American painting is still a little naive, youthful, and full of the open air. And the result is that an art so immediately felt is bound to be sloppy technically. To find one's best, one must loosen up a little in craftsmanship. We Americans can paint circles around others in matters of feeling, but we need to learn some of the others' technical competence. We are aiming at an art that shall be one personality, not technical prestidigitation. We can only do our best to express ourselves with what means we have."

Oldfield's art contains a force and certain qualities which appeal to the art loving layman. He is not afraid of ugly subject matter for he knows that he can deal with it in such a fashion as to produce a kind of beauty. The reputation he has established in his famed portrayals of the American scene has brought him admirers from all over the world and from every walk of life. His approach has always been that of one thoroughly at home with his subject. This quality of familiarity shows in his portraits as well as his landscapes. His work is spontaneous and completely his own, and the perserverance and calm tempo one senses beneath his painting is more satisfying than any brilliance

in treatment. Unrestrained by narrow conceptions or technical limitations, his life and his art are full and unpretentious and indicate his ability to deal with fresh problems as they arise. With the intuition of a bold and truly penetrating artist, he accepts the challenge to encompass the new life patterns with a new art.

Oldfield automatically takes his place among the leaders of California modernism. By theory and example he has guided those revolutionary trends which have developed higher levels in the work of the younger artists. Meanwhile his own horizons have expanded, both in the eyes of the critics and the public, and the development of his painting is proof of a tangible point of view rather than the mere expression of revolt.

He may not have completely shed the flavor of Montmartre, but it can be said with some degree of finality that the synthesized product of his study and experiment has developed into a popular and praiseworthy style of art with the artist's powers in full fruition.

OTIS OLDFIELD

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

La Poele, Salon des Independents, Paris	1912
Pyrenees Series, Panardi Galerie, Paris	1924
Man With Dog, Paris	1924
Knife Grinder, San Francisco Art Association	1925
Telegraph Hill, Beaux Arts, San Francisco	1927
A Sierra Promenade, Beaux Arts, San Francisco	1928
The Kids, Montrose Gallery, New York	1929
Pier 29, Beaux Arts, San Francisco	1929
A Little Country Promenade, Beaux Arts, San Francisco	1930
Steamboating on the Dover, Montrose Gallery, New York	1930
Alaska on a Windjammer, Beaux Arts, San Francisco	1931
Hill Folk Series, Gruen Studios, San Francisco	1931
Boats of the Bay, Beaux Arts, San Francisco	1931
Figure, California State Fair, Sacramento	1934
Coit Tower Mural, San Francisco	1934
Codfisher, San Francisco Museum of Art	1935
Two Heads, San Francisco Art Center	1935
Louise Departs, Annual Art Association Show	1937

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

Senator Phelan Collection, San Francisco (purchased in 1928)
Telegraph Hill

Bliss Collection, New York (by purchase)
Telegraph Hill Series--Three (water colors)

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:

Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York
Telegraph Hill Series (Two)

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco
Drawing

San Francisco Art Association Collection

De Young Museum Collection, San Francisco

San Francisco Museum of Art Collection
Bender Collection
Pier 17 (oil)

Coit Tower on Telegraph Hill, San Francisco, 1933
Water Front (Mural--oil)

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California
San Francisco Art Association

La Paysanne	1925
Ghost (landscape)	1927
Kitchen	"
Hiker	"
Luminous Zoning	1928
Jack of Spades	"
Two Paintings in oil	1929
Red Dress	1930
Marine Studies	1931
Green Dress (oil)	"
Leather Shirt "	"
Ship Corner "	"
Little Four-Year-Old (oil)	1934
Little Girl	"

Galerie Beaux Arts

Street Fair Girl	1925
One-Man-Show	1926
One-Man-Show	1927
Telegraph Hill	"
Wild Grasses	"
Oasis	"
Prohibition Castle	"
Ice Cream, Sierra Style	"
Cross Roads Cemetery	"
A Confetti of Cottonwoods	"
Docks	1929
One-Man Show	1930
Self-Portrait	"
A Little Country Promenade (oil)	"
Still Life	"
Head Study	"
The Steamer (ink and water color)	"
The Rudder " " " "	"
Water Colors	1931
Iron Ship	1932
One-Man Show	1936
Old Homestead	"

Art Center

Still-Life	1934
Still-Life	1935

Artists and Writers Union

Self-Portrait	1934

Gruen Studio

Hill Folks	1931

Gump's Gallery

Man with Dog	1932

San Francisco Museum of Art

Codfisher (oil) Popularity Prize of $100	1935

San Francisco Women's City Club 1936

White House Gallery 1936

Also various other local exhibitions in San Francisco since 1924

Burlingame, California
  Crawford Studio Shop 1931

Oakland, California
  Oakland Art League Exhibition, Mills College
    Theme in Yellow 1928
  Oakland Art Gallery
    Iron Ship 1930

Sacramento, California
  State Fair
    Leather Shirt 1931
    Figure (First Prize Award)
  Kingsley Art Club's Annual Exhibition
    The Codfisher 1937

Santa Cruz, California
  Santa Cruz Art League
    Schooner Charles Wilson 1932
    Four Sisters

Boston, Massachusetts
  Boston Art Club Show 1927

New York City, New York
  Montrose Gallery
    One-Man Show 1929
    One-Man Show 1930
  Harriman Gallery Exhibition
    Water Colors 1930
  Brownell-Lambertson Gallery
    Water Color Drawings 1931
  Whitney Museum, First Biennial Exhibition
    Little Four-Year-Old (Portrait) 1932
  Museum of Modern Art
    Figure 1935

Paris, France
  Salon d'Automme, 1912, 1919, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924
  Salon des Independants, 1912, 1923, 1924
  Panardi Gallery, 1923; One-Man Show, 1924

Exhibitions in Brazil, Japan, Russia 1924

AWARDS:

Gold Medal--San Francisco Art Association, Oil Knife Grinder, 1925

First Prize, $50.--California State Fair, Sacramento, California; Figure, Oil, 1933

Popularity Prize, $100.--San Francisco Museum of Art; Codfisher, Oil, 1935

CLUBS:

Member:

Salon d'Automne, Paris, France
Societe Independants des Artistes, Paris, France
San Francisco Art Association, San Francisco, California
Federation of Western Artists, Los Angeles, California

OTIS OLDFIELD

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M A T T H E W J. B A R N E S

1886..... . . .

Biography and Works

"TWILIGHT"

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MATTHEW BARNES

SCOTTISH BIRTH AND INHERITANCE

Matthew Barnes, whose importance in the San Francisco art world has only recently been generally recognized, was born in Kilmarnock, not far from the Firth of Clyde in Ayreshire, Scotland, in 1886.

An inextricable part of his childhood were the old Scottish folk-lore concerning:

> "...ghasties and ghoulies and four-legged beasties,
> And things that go 'whoosh' in the night...."

and such fireside tales, combined with the influence of the louring, sullen, misty country of his birth, made a deep impression on his childish mind and imagination. Later they were to become an integral part of his painting.

As little more than a boy, he was apprenticed to a commercial craftsman whose business it was to produce (and occasionally even to design) the ornamental plaster-work on and in buildings. In those days ornamental plasterers were far closer in spirit to the artist-craftsmen of the Middle Ages and young Matt, under a discipline both stimulating and severe, learned the joy of hard, painstaking work and its relation to the creation of beauty.

ARRIVAL IN AMERICA

At the age of twenty, he came to New York with his parents, but after only a few months there, traveled westward

to San Francisco. Here he arrived shortly after the city's partial destruction by fire and earthquake in 1906. During San Francisco's reconstruction period his early training stood him in good stead, the architecture of the time calling for a great deal of ornamental plaster work.

During the course of one such job, he happened upon an artist painting away at a canvas and felt instantly a kinship with the man at the easel. Without further consideration he bought the requisite materials and set to work for himself.

Probably it was by reason of the imaginative quality of his Scotch mind and as a result of his early response to the creation of beauty that he was swept into the field of art. What he needed was a medium that presented adequate means of personal expression and a retreat from the world. It is possible that he chose painting for its color and its adaptability to the portrayal of the tenuous, fleeting figures which remained in his mind from his childhood memories.

Certainly he never had an eye to future fame as an artist, for he painted as he chose, when he felt like painting, making no attempt to conform to academic rules, either of drawing or painting, and wasting no time in the schools which taught them.

Nevertheless, his spare time was devoted to his hobby and he turned slow canvas after slow canvas in an at-

tempt to visualize concretely a nebulous something which haunted him, always with him but just out of his mind's reach.

EARLY EXHIBITIONS

In 1916, when Barnes was thirty years old, his first works were exhibited in the Annual Exhibition of the San Francisco Art Association. While local art critics gave him little notice, perceptive fellow artists realized that here was a promising talent. Other painters recognized, if critics did not, that Barnes was a man who had attained praiseworthy control of his abilities and succeeded in expressing himself without dependence on academic formulae.

Louise Taber, speaking of his entry in the Annual Exhibition at the Palace of Fine Arts, said in the Wasp, May 4, 1918:

> "'Oakland Creek' attracts the eye at once with its dash of color and life. It is modern and holds nothing bizarre."

His pastel, "Telegraph Hill," shown in the Second Jury Free Exhibition of the San Francisco Art Association that fall, attracted no attention whatever.

But in 1919, during the 43rd Annual of the San Francisco Art Association, where he exhibited an oil "Butchertown," and a pastel, "Boat House," Willard Huntington Wright, internationally known art critic then lecturing in California, gave the public a glimpse of the strength and importance of Barnes individualistic approach. His article "Vital Tendencies in

Modern Art Methods" in the San Francisco Bulletin, March 29, 1919, said:

> "There is also a straightforward manner in Matthew Barnes' 'Butchertown' though Barnes is more advanced in conception than Fletcher (Godfrey Fletcher, a fellow exhibitor). His plans are harmonic, and despite his too high tonality, the picture has considerable life. Its simplifications and pure color constitute a salutary antidote to the crowded and neutral canvases of the Barbizon school."

His work was mentioned in the International Studio, June 1919, when John Norton wrote that "a new standard in Western art has been set by the 43rd Annual Exhibition at the San Francisco Palace of Fine Arts," and continued by quoting Wright.

RECOGNITION AS AN INDIVIDUALIST

But the run of the mill critics had apparently paid little attention to the interpretations of Wright and Norton, for although Barnes continued to show one or two of his canvases each succeeding year with the Art Association's annual and jury free exhibitions, it was not until some eight years later that he received recognition on his own terms. At the 49th Annual Exhibit in 1927, "The Flood" won an honorable mention. Speaking of Barnes' picture the Argus, on April 15 of that year, stated:

> "'The Flood'....is full of humor and is a fine bit of modern painting where some of the school principles are sacrificed to a more vivid, a truer expression of oneself."

While still comparatively unknown to press and public, Barnes' progressive fellow artists accepted him and invited him to become a charter member of the Modern Gallery, located at 718 Montgomery Street, San Francisco. This co-operative gallery was instituted as a means of bringing the younger artists to the notice of the critics and art patrons. The new East West Gallery, in the Western Women's Club on Sutter Street, also presented young modernists to the art public and gave Barnes ample space. His first one-man show was sponsored by the Modern Gallery where he exhibited paintings selected from his work over a period of eighteen years.

Jehanne Bietry Salinger, in the Argus of February 1928, writes:

> "From an almost direct rendition of nature, this artist has slowly evolved a language of his own, a symbolism of colors and forms which may not be easily transcribed in practical words, but is none the less expressive of a rare artistic temperament.
>
> "'Outskirts' is particularly typical of Barnes' individual expression. A group of houses and the steeple of a little church fade away in the darkness that falls over the city. Leading away from it there is a road which loses itself in the foreground. A lone figure walks on that road and a beautiful rose light streams over it and seems to tell of the calm and beauty of solitude away from the strenuous and noisy life of the city.
>
> "'The Flood' is a humoristic conception of what might be described as a disaster. A man and woman are seen standing on the roof of their house passively and candidly looking at the water all around them.

> "'Deserted Cabin' showing only the side of a wooden cabin on the edge of a wide road that winds around a mountain and loses itself in the dark, is an impressive painting, almost a symphony in minor which sings unmistakably on the theme of an ended story and an empty heart."

In the same publication for the month of January 1928, she mentions Barnes as having contributed to the "most colorful, the most brilliant show of the year," the exhibition by Western artists at the East-West Gallery. Again, in the San Francisco Examiner, January 1, 1928, she writes of Barnes' works in the same exhibit:

> "A landscape composition by Matthew Barnes, now on the walls of the East-West Gallery, is one of the pictures which, on closer acquaintance, proves to be of particular interest and attraction. It is an impressive canvas where masses and a play of light on a narrow road are the sole means of expressing a sort of mystic feeling."

PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

Barnes' insistence on painting subjectively, unhampered by the necessity to impress or please people, led Junius Cravens in the Argonaut, January 21, 1928, to write:

> "Barnes is a painter of many moods and, during the eighteen years of work represented in this collection he has, of course, passed through many phases of development. His later things suggest an obscure symbolism which they fail to explain sufficiently to make them understand. In fact, one almost wonders if he knows himself what he wishes to say in his canvases, beyond their being decorative developments of rather banal subjects. Many of them would make rather effective small drawings, but hardly seem worth taking so seriously as to be developed with canvas and

> paint. However, he has a unique imaginative element in his work that, given a more weighty objective, could be productive of something quite fine.
>
> "The more conventional canvases, such as 'Truck Ranch' and 'Telegraph Hill,' which have probably been chosen possibly from among his earlier works, are the most pleasing things he is showing. A later work, 'Hillside, San Bruno,' has in it fine massive forms and is, somehow, pleasing in spite of its involved color organization which unpleasantly suggests internal human anatomy."

The uncertainty among art critics as to how to evaluate Barnes' work despite the fact that he split a $100 prize with Ralph Chesse, puppeteer-artist, in the San Francisco Art Association Annual is revealed in the San Francisco Chronicle of April 29, 1928. Ignoring any critical comment, the article merely mentions:

> "One hundred and twelve artists are represented in the San Francisco Art Association annual.... The entire exhibition is noticeably dominated by the attitude labeled 'Modern.'
>
> "The two pictures which were awarded the Anne Bremer second prize are much more lugubrious. Ralph Chesse has painted his 'Negro Madonna' in mournful blue blacks. Matthew Barnes' 'March Moon' is also the product of a blue mood. It is hung far in one corner, where it is hard to take other than a close analytical view of it."

On the other hand, Jehanne Bietry Salinger, in writing of Barnes' entries in the first semi-annual exhibition by the Modern Gallery group held at the East-West Gallery, feared that these works were not a phase in the artist's development but a digression. In the Argus of June, 1928, she says:

> "Matthew Barnes had three landscapes, two called 'Summer,' one 'Winter.' They were

> painted in the manner which the artist seems to have adopted definitely as a style and there is the only quarrel I have with him on his work. His growing forms, his beautiful colors, may turn out to be a convenient style, but to the detriment of a more sincere evolution."

But her attitude was not general, for Junius Cravens in the Argonaut of May 19, 1928, reported on this exhibit:

> "....two landscapes by Matthew Barnes are the best examples of his work that we have seen. They are particularly beautiful in color and seem to us to be infinitely finer works of art than was the canvas 'March Moon' which he showed at the recent Art Association annual. The summer landscape, in which a figure stands near the foreground, in half shadow, is by all means the most masterful painting in the exhibition. In these two canvases Barnes has produced something that one may return to many times. If you are collecting works by potential American masters which you can at the same time enjoy living with, we would recommend one of these landscapes."

And although only a short half-year before the best that Junius Cravens could say about Barnes' one-man show was that it was "pleasing," in the October 27, 1928 issue of the Argonaut, he quotes eastern critics and is full of praise:

> "The editor of the Art Digest once said in a review that the big San Francisco exhibitions are the only ones in the country which are 'favorable to Modernism--except of course the Carnegie International.' Walt Kuhn said during his recent visit here that San Francisco is producing more and finer modern art than any city in the country.
>
> "No single San Francisco organization has followed more constructively the contemporary development of art than has the Modern Gallery Group, and its current semi-annual exhibition at the East-West Gallery reveals the strength that this group is constantly gaining, individually and collectively.

> "There is such a wealth of fine material in the exhibition that one is at a loss to pick out even a few things for special mention. But we were most impressed by two of Matthew Barnes four canvases. 'Moon and the Movies' is the finest painted document of our day that we have seen. This is one of those rare canvases that is to be acclaimed and appreciated by future generations. 'Ghosts of Darkness' is fittingly haunting in its impressive strength of conception and beauty of design and color.
>
> "Barnes, comparatively speaking, is unrecognized even locally, but though he were never to produce another canvas, his name will one day be familiar to the whole world."

Barnes' work achieved an immediate vogue, particularly in the Bay Region, and Florence Weiben Lehre of the Oakland Art Gallery wrote in the Argus, December, 1928:

> "The winter annual show of the Berkeley League is small but choice. Matthew Barnes' 'Night,' an oil, is in great contrast to the angular use of form indulged in by most of our modernists. Barnes goes in for sinuosities."

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Now that Barnes' individual paintings were beginning to be known, critics began to evaluate the artist and his works as a whole. Junius Cravens in the Argonaut, January 26, 1929, writes:

> "And speaking of the true artist (of whom Walter Pach says in his sensationally frank book, 'Ananias, or the False Artist,' there are not more than one hundred out of about forty thousand), Matthew Barnes and Edward Hagedorn will have a joint exhibition of their works....San Francisco is fortunate in having within its gates several true artists--an unusual number of them in proportion to its size--and Barnes and Hagedorn are of that number as far as being true to their convictions

> goes. Barnes has been painting for twenty-five years and has never sold a canvas. But he is still painting and will continue to paint as long as he draws breath--because he is a true artist."

Aline Kistler, in the San Francisco Chronicle, January 27, 1929, writes of this two-man exhibition held at the East-West Gallery:

> "Barnes paints for the sheer love of painting, and earns his livelihood away from his easel. He paints as he wants to, and refuses to listen to condemnations of people at large.
>
> "The work of both men lends itself to pathological analysis but it also represents a phase of expression highly in favor by an increasing number of people. As such, and as sincere creative expression, this exhibition deserves sympathetic consideration rather than mere cursory criticism from a conservative viewpoint."

Junius Cravens elaborated further on Aline Kistler's term, "a phase of expression," in an article in the Argus of February 1929. Aware that Barnes had been named many things such as "modernist," "individualist" and "imagist," Cravens wrote:

> "Matthew Barnes might be called an expressionistic painter, were a label necessary, though he has never felt the need of attaching the tag of an -ism to his works. He has always gone about the business of painting quietly, conscienciously and with a fervent desire to arrive at an understanding of art, as it applies to himself.
>
> "It has never occurred to Barnes to paint for anyone but himself, because the public and popular demand, for him, does not exist. He has never attended an art school. He has painted when he had the time or when he had the money, solely because there was that within him

demanded expression through the media of form and color.

"Like all purely creative artists, Barnes has passed through various phases of development. He has sometimes resorted to the use of abstract forms, to which he seems partial, and he has sometimes used allegorical or symbolical subjects. But, for him, subject matter is not, in itself, an end. It serves him only as a means to an emotional expression, a vehicle for form and color, for he is not concerned with literal representation.

"His work is not pleasing, in the popular sense because it is not readily understood. But if one studies his paintings, collectively, one begins to realize that beneath the tragical loneliness that is everywhere apparent in them, there is deep sincerity of purpose and unusual honesty of expression. His roads are lonely roads, whether they lead over wistfully beautiful twilight hills, or through the half-deserted night streets of the city. They may lack pure lure and appeal in the accepted sense, but there is in them what one might call a warm coolness of color, a somber richness, that betrays the exaltation of him who travels them alone."

The introspective approach of Barnes to his art which had escaped Cravens earlier had now become evident, and he continues in the same article:

"Regardless of subject matter, Barnes' interpretations are poignantly personal in the almost overwhelming, if hidden, emotions they express. Their deeper qualities are not at first apparent, because there is nothing superficial in his works that one may grasp at a glance. To appreciate their worth one must come to know them. They require consideration and the test of time. And in that quality lies one of the great secrets of their worth--a secret which will be recognized and valued by future generations.

"....mere incidents in a quarter of a century of labor (are the honorable mention received

> at the annual exhibition of the Art Association in 1927 and the second prize awarded in 1928). They are pleasant incidents, no doubt, and probably encouraging ones--but incidents, none the less.
>
> "The significant thing is that Barnes has remained steadfast in his faith in himself and in his art. In order to do so, he has had to endure privations and make sacrifices, as only the true artist can. So he has paid a price for the secret of his art. Whether he ever sells even one of his works or not is a matter of small consequence, for their value is of a kind which may not be counted in coin."

The Art Digest of New York, a magazine of national reputation, reprinted this article in full under the title, "A Lone Wolf on a Lone Trail," giving national recognition to the hitherto obscure San Francisco painter.

Jehanne Bietry Salinger in the San Francisco Examiner, January 27, 1929, writes of Barnes in the same vein:

> "Barnes is not only a singular case of self development and originality of expression but, as previous showings of his paintings have brought forward, he has, during the last eighteen years which he devoted to painting, evolved a beautiful symbolism of color and composition.
>
> "A poet, Barnes does not describe any more than he explains. He tries to convey his successive visions of realities or his emotions through a technique, all his own, and through the medium of colors which appear somber at the first glance and somewhat monotonous but which have a strange richness and a glow which attracts you."

Aline Kistler was also impressed by the emotional expression of Barnes' work, and in the San Francisco Chronicle, February 3, 1929, she writes:

> "An individual palette marks Matthew Barnes' paintings. Their dark blues, purples and allied night tones weight his half of the gal-

lery with a somber mood. And there is an eerie quality to the luminous effect of Barnes central points of interest that haunt one's memory of the exhibition.

"These are strange paintings to be produced in 1929. There is about them a feeling of foreboding, such an air of instinctive fear that it would be far easier to relate them to a superstition ridden age than to the present day.

"The largest of Barnes' paintings is 'Crime and Concrete.' It is a dark wall of night from which square factory windows stare with an uncompromising glare on the tiny figures of prowlers huddled beneath a street lamp. It is stark, ominous, guttural in its presentation. Another painting called 'Gossiping Ghosts' shows an angry red figure seated by a window while outside the bold ghosts strut down the street safe in their frame of night. 'Russ in the Fog' is clearly a moody transcription of Montgomery Street. 'Trinkets and Toys' tells a simple story of window shoppers shut out from the city within. 'Summer Storm' and 'Flats' are patently interpretations of emotional reactions and as such they are more closely related to the things Barnes has exhibited before than are the other paintings."

The Argonaut of February 9, 1929, again ran a lengthy article by Junius Cravens in which he commented still farther on the Barnes-Hagedorn joint exhibition:

"The layman who likes his art photographically representational will not find much to please him in this exhibition....The show is likely to be even less popular, if such a thing is possible, with artists who pander to the tastes of such laymen and who extort money from them in exchange for copying in oil, water color or etching their favorite photograph.

"...Neither Barnes nor Hagedorn seem to be much concerned with imitation, color-photography, sentimental retrospection or post mortems. They take their art straight--undiluted as it were--and at least some of the spectators who wander in to look it over think that Barnes is 'cuckoo' because his trees have no leaves on them.

> "Be that as it may, the work of both men is exceptionally pure expression as creative expression goes, and their joint exhibition is an important artistic event of the current season. We are interested to note that Barnes' older canvases, tho in quite a different mood from his latest ones, improve with time."

Another local art critic, Gobind Behari Lal, writes in the San Francisco Examiner of July 28, 1929:

> "Matthew Barnes' depiction of night is a beautiful and novel thing. Here, a difficult manipulation of colors and forms enables the artist to objectify the romance of evening after sundown."

AS PLAYWRIGHT AND ACTOR

It was during 1929 that he made his first professional contact with the theatre when he designed a stage setting for Singe's "Playboy of the Western World," which was given by a small stock company in New York.

And he did not stop there, for over a period of years and up to the time of the writing of this monograph he wrote over a dozen plays, some of which have been produced by amateur groups in San Francisco. He also acts occasionally in his own plays. Being wholly independent of academic rules and regulations, he feels no sense of limitation, regardless of the medium he chooses for expression.

CONTACT WITH DIEGO RIVERA

In 1931 and 1932 when Diego Rivera, famous Mexican fresco painter, visited California and executed several controversial mural decorations, Barnes assisted him in the

technical preparation and application of the plaster, as well as working under him on various areas.

California Arts and Architecture, June 1932, prints an interview with Mrs. Sigmund Stern, for whose country home in Atherton, California,Rivera did what is considered by many to be his finest work in the Bay Region. Mrs. Stern, a well known San Francisco art patron, said:

> "Rivera came down about a week later with his wife, Frieda, and Matthew Barnes, his plasterer. Barnes, I found out later, is an excellent painter, a writer of short stories as well as an actor, but he came down in the capacity of plasterer and assistant to Diego Rivera.
>
> "The wall was prepared with a steel frame, to make it possible, if it should be found advisable at some later date, to preserve the fresco by cutting it out of the wall. A very thin coat of fresco-plaster was put on to cover the frame, and then a fine plaster made of marble dust was applied, a little each day, as the section to be painted that day was painted according to the artist's wishes.
>
> "Barnes started his plastering at six every morning...."

Of the mural decoration executed by Rivera for the California School of Fine Arts, the San Francisco Examiner, August 9, 1931, writes:

> "Diego Rivera portrayed himself with his assistant Matthew Barnes in the California School of Fine Arts mural."

He also incorporated satirical likenesses of the architect and patron members of the Art Association as well as local artists.

OTHER EXHIBITIONS

At the 53rd Annual of the San Francisco Art Association, Barnes displayed an oil, "Playful Snakes"; while at the 54th Annual, in 1932, his "City Corner" impressed critics by the substantial development in his work. The Argonaut of May 13, 1932 stated:

> "His 'City Corner' stands out particularly as an achievement. It is not only well painted but it has imagination, poetry, form, color, organization and other qualities which make toward mature expression."

In the summer of 1932, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor innovated a Summer Annual, a showing of oil paintings by California artists, at which Matthew Barnes was represented. The same collection was later shown in Oakland and Los Angeles where it aroused considerable comment. Arthur Millier in the Los Angeles Times, October 2, 1932, writes:

> "There are individual works that stand out, fresh and unaffected. Matthew Barnes' 'Sea Lyric' is one."

A San Francisco Call-Bulletin column, "Art Murmurs," November 19, 1932, add a personal note regarding the versatile Barnes:

> "Montgomery Street is going chess mad, the younger artists studying the game and holding tourneys. Pawn pushing artists include Matthew Barnes...."

SOCIETY OF PROGRESSIVE ARTISTS

Early in January of 1933, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor refused an exhibit arranged by Joseph A.

Danysh of the works of advanced California painters and sculptors on the ground that the museum could not jeopardize its artistic standing by showing works whose merits were still so greatly questioned. This group, then calling itself the "Society of Progressive Artists," opened its exhibit in the City of Paris Galleries.

The San Francisco Examiner, January 25, 1933, commented:

> "'The experimenter and the progressive has always to combat his own temptations for compromise,' Danysh said at an invitational prevue yesterday. 'This group stands for the progressive and the experimental in art. Only a vigorous art ever had to fight for its principles.' Included in the artists in the show is Matthew Barnes...."

The San Francisco Chronicle, January 29, 1933, stresses the controversial nature of the exhibit and continues:

> "The show has live artistic interest, since it represents in great variety of purpose and accomplishment the efforts of many of the city's more daring creative spirits....Weird night scenes are a specialty of Matthew Barnes."

H. L. Dungan in the Oakland Tribune, January 29, 1933 mentions "Four leafless trees rising out of the dark; a grey road at the left; a human figure suggested. Typically Barnes in his dramatic mood." Howard Talbot in the Wasp, February 4, 1933, writes:

> "....I saw a good many artists who cleave to a more conventional tradition observing the offerings with expressions ranging from tolerant to enthusiastic. Among the studies which struck my fancy were Matthew Barnes' striking 'Crime in Concrete' with its masses of black paint and light pouring through glass, handled in a very

effective manner within the flat plane of the canvas."

SECOND ONE-MAN SHOW

The interest in Barnes' work resulting from the Progressive's exhibition led to his second one-man shows. The San Francisco News, February 25, 1933 announced:

"The City of Paris will open its fourth floor art gallery Wednesday with a one-man show of oils by Matthew Barnes. Mr. Barnes was one of the stars of the recent Progressive Artists' Exhibit."

Anna Sommer later wrote in the same paper, March 4, 1933:

"Matthew Barnes, San Francisco painter, recalls the perpetual, wide-eyed child that is Robert Louis Stevenson when that poet chants about his shadow, the lamplighter and 'the dark.'

"The one emotion, however, diversely clothed, exuded by all his 30 odd paintings, is that shuddering delight in the aspects of the night, a mood that is romantic rather than mystic."

Of the same exhibit, the Argonaut, March 3, 1933, held:

"Barnes is probably one of the most original, interesting and truly creative artists on the West Coast, and one whose work stands very substantially on its own merits. As one too seldom has an opportunity of seeing a collection of his works, those who have followed Barnes' career as a painter will welcome this....retrospective exhibition...."

In an lengthy article, the San Francisco Examiner, March 5, 1933, writes:

"The burr of his native Kilmarnock still clings; but under the racial shell is hidden a poet who expresses himself in the harmonies of color.

"Rather an extraordinary being, to tell the truth, a man for whom the interplay of light and shade and the mystery of darkness have a fascination that is almost an obsession.

"There is not a negligible canvas in the whole collection....Take, for example, 'Crime and Concrete,' with its huge factory windows, the darkness without, and light falling on a couple of figures that avoid too close definition. There is more than representation here. The picture's success largely lies in the imagination of the beholder.

"Then look at those 'Dancing Trees.' It is a nocturne; but a sharp light defines a group of skeleton trees. Where does the light come from? Is it from a passing car, or is the luminosity purely an arbitrary conceit? Whatever the answer, there is a spectral magic in the work.

"Barnes paints ruggedly; his work is masculine. His 'Storm' is a seascape of rare imagination, an interpretation of angry natural forces, with touches of humanity that make it sympathetic.

"There are street scenes, storewindows with harmony of light and darkness, a splendid vista of cliffs with a yeasty sea, a hallucinatory vision of what is probably Telegraph Hill, uncanny glimpses of Nature and uncannier humanity. Matthew Barnes is an outstanding figure in the art of our West."

Junius Cravens in the Argonaut, March 10, 1933, praised highly the majority of Barnes' canvases but criticised two of them:

"....at times Barnes seems to have mistrusted the stillness of aloneness, has become frightened, as it were, and gone 'running after strange gods.' One sense those doubts in such canvases as 'Playful Snakes,' or 'Portrait with Trees,' for instance; figure works which we feel do not ring true and which are therefore unworthy of his brush. Well, that is unfortunate but it may do him no ultimate harm. One day he may destroy such canvases and forget that they ever existed. They may at least have served to teach him that he is too big an artist to resort to affectations, that he does not need to go outside himself be-

So controversial were public comment and press notices of this exhibit that Joseph A. Danysh, sponsor of the show, offered a cash prize for the best essay on any phase of the paintings by Matthew Barnes.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

A small collection of Barnes' canvases were shown in New York city at the Museum of Modern Art as a result of this much debated one-man showing at the City of Paris. Barnes had not sold even one painting in san Francisco, in spite of the many thousands of people who visited the Progressive Artists' Exhibition, the Barnes-Hagedorn joint exhibit and Barnes' one-man show. Yet, when he went to New York, four pictures sold immediately to discriminating collectors of contemporary American art.

Junius Cravens deplores this situation in an article, "Those Who Buy Art," Argonaut, March 17, 1933:

> "All questions of modernism aside, there are as many (if not more) paintings and sculptures exhibited in San Francisco, per capita, in the course of each year, as in any city in the country. One wonders why since, comparatively speaking, San Franciscans do not support the fine arts. Yes, a few people have creditable collections of etchings, and a 'handful' of good paintings are owned locally. But as compared to other communities, the well-to-do people of San Francisco do nothing toward the encouragement and development of art or artists.
>
> "An outstanding example is the case of Matthew Barnes, a painter of rare ability. Barnes exhibited here for a quarter of a century without selling a single canvas. Four were bought immediately in New York. At this writing, nothing has been bought from his recent exhibition here.

> But Barnes is no exception to the local rule. San Franciscans support music, but they have yet to become art conscious. We may 'know how' to do some things, but our artists have to go elsewhere to be appreciated."

As positive proof of the apathy of San Francisco art patronage, the City of Paris Gallery closed in 1933. Joseph A. Danysh in the Argonaut, June 23, 1933 said bitterly:

> "The City of Paris has decided not to serve the Muses and Moloch both so they have converted their Normandie Lane Gallery into a men's grill. Over five thousand visitors to see the Progressive exhibit; more than three thousand looking at Matthew Barnes' show there during such uninspiring times as the bank holiday; hundreds going daily to the Normandie Lane offerings--and now, a Men's Grill!"

ADAMS-DANYSH GALLERIES

In the spring of 1934, the Adams-Danysh Galleries were occupying the old Galerie Beaux Arts location at 166 Geary Street and Maiden Lane. They devoted their rooms during March to a recent group of twelve paintings by Matthew Barnes. Of this exhibition the Berkeley Gazette, February 22, 1934 said:

> "Although Barnes has been painting and living in San Francisco for nearly 30 years and received early recognition in the East, it is only within the last two or three years that this city has awarded him the place in its art world which he rightly deserves."

By this time the Portland Museum had included Barnes in their selection of the fifty greatest American painters; the Marguery Hotel exhibit in New York had displayed five of Barnes' canvases; the New York press had reviewed and reproduced his works; and George Luks had called him" one of our most vigorous

living painters." There were three Barnes canvases owned by Chicago collectors; and four more in as many collections in New York.

Of the exhibit in the Adams-Danysh Galleries, Junius Cravens in the San Francisco News, March 3, 1934 wrote:

> "Barnes would doubtless be called a 'modernist' by undiscerning observers, though the truth is that he is just Barnes. But when, after six or seven years, one again sees certain of his canvases and finds them as fresh, thrilling and far ahead of their time as they were when they were painted, one wonders if Barnes' art may not be timeless, may not belong to the ages. I can recall but few contemporary paintings, even those that have been awarded prizes at exhibitions, of which I could honestly say the same.
>
> "It is not my intention to imply that every canvas that Barnes is showing is a masterpiece. Far from it. In my opinion, his nude, for instance--the first he has ever exhibited--is Barbary Coast art, and not the best at that. His night scene of Telegraph Hill, with its crowning architectural excrescence illuminated, is a mere 'chromo.' But paintings such as 'Moon and the Movies,' which is six years old, and 'Three Houses,' a new canvas, outweigh those misguided experiments by so far that they need not even be considered.
>
> "Predictions are unwise. I do not pretend to know whether or not Barnes is a great painter. But I do know that if I were a collector there are more than one of his works that I would be more than willing to take a chance on."

Glenn Wessels in the Argonaut, March 9, 1934 said of the same exhibit:

> "Matthew Barnes is a teller of eerie tales in paint, a singer of minor dirges....
>
> "Scotch fantasy, the wail of the bagpipe, the macabre playfulness of the dour race, and some of their Presbyterian metaphysics for the first

and perhaps the only time expressed in paint! Seeing these nocturnes becomes an imperative venture for the art curious San Franciscan."

In the Wasp, March 3, 1934, H. Talbot stated:

"On account of the intellectual content of his paintings, Barnes' strongest appeal is doubtless to the discriminating few....I believe, though, that as this artist's work becomes more familiar to the public here, he will find a wide following even outside the 'discriminating few' mentioned above. This opinion is rooted in the potent mystical appeal of his canvases, which is something more than technical ability, though it grows out of it. His profoundly solemn paintings of night exercise over me a spell that is nothing short of mesmeric. I carry these visions of splendid darkness about with me after I have seen them. They come back to me like certain stately, mournful passages of poetry or music.

"In spite of the mystery of the nocturnes, they are painted with an impressive sincerity and vigor. There is conviction in them and a sense of quiet reserves of power--qualities found in all the artist's works which I have seen, in this and other collections."

And H. L. Dungan in the Oakland Tribune, March 4, 1934 added:

"All of these canvases may be called nocturnes, even the single nude he displays--his first, by the way. For this nude, I am told, he had no model, nor does nature, when he paints from it, force him to follow its mass and line. He shifts the scene according to his fancy, making it in a way unreal, yet appealing as something that is real and vital. His trees are leafless, his street lamps cast deep shadows, his human figures crouch. A dreamer in paint is Matthew Barnes. Time will tell if the dreams are great."

BARRED IN LOS ANGELES

In the summer of 1934, the Los Angeles Biltmore Salon jury rejected a showing of San Francisco artists, among

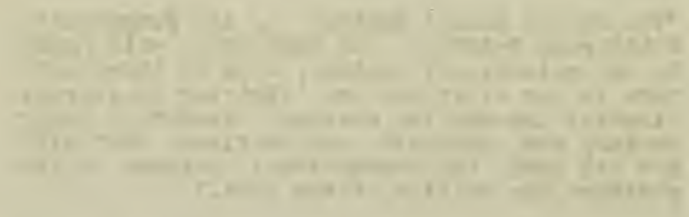
whom was Matthew Barnes. Of this exhibit, later shown at the Adams-Danysh Galleries in San Francisco, Glenn Wessels in the Argonaut, June 15, 1934, wrote:

> "Perhaps the least said of the jury that rejected them the better, after all the fuss. Some of the paintings are very good, some not so good, but the average is nothing to be ashamed of. One of the most effective from any standpoint is....a Barnes painting of a storm and a pier head. Perhaps the most interesting thing in the show is the very painters to render the sincerest form of flattery to Matthew Barnes, San Francisco's long neglected surrealist. If I were a prophet I would prophesy that Barnes' stature will be recognized eventually and that he is quite possibly the seed of a 'San Francisco school.'"

In October the San Francisco Progressive Group again exhibited at the Danysh Galleries in a highly selective showing, and Barnes, a member, participated. The Wasp, September 29, 1934 announced the show:

> "The Second Annual Exhibit of the Progressive California Painters and Sculptors will again be an invitational exhibit, open to those artists in our midst who are striving to express directly through the abstract element of their medium, new concepts and emotions that will not fit into the conventional pattern of the photographic realism of the past."

Barnes also exhibited that fall at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor in a group showing of Northern California artists. The Peninsulan, October 1934 announced at this time that the Danysh Galleries had sold a painting by Barnes, and that Mrs. Sigmund Stern of San Francisco had included Barnes' canvases in her private collection. Also,



Sheldon Cheney, contemporary European and American art authority, author of "The Primer of Modern Art," included three reproductions of Barnes' paintings in his new volume, "Expressionism in Art," which became a best seller in art circles.

RECOGNITION IN PUBLICATIONS

Of this recognition accorded Barnes, William Saroyan, young California Armenian short-story writer who was currently the season's literary vogue, wrote in the San Francisco Call-Bulletin, December 22, 1934 in an article headed, "Famed Flying Trapeze Scribe Lauds Art of Matthew Barnes":

> "This is about Matthew Barnes.
>
> "I know him and you probably don't, so I'll try to tell you about him in my own ungrammatical way.
>
> "Matthew Barnes is a fellow who paints pictures, but for the love of Mike don't get excited because he isn't one of those artistic boys at all. He is a quiet witty fellow who paints pictures because he likes to paint them, and needs to paint them, and thinks nothing of it. Maybe you run an elevator. You're not proud. Neither is Matthew Barnes. This is one of the reasons he is such a great painter, and he IS great. I'm not telling you. It's in a book.
>
> "The book has just been published. It is by Sheldon Cheney who is an authority in his field. An authority is someone or anyone who can talk about anything just a little simpler than everybody else and say something. The book is called 'Expressionism in Art,' but who cares about that? I mean, the book is actually about men who can do things other men haven't time or talent enough to do, and you don't need to let the name of the book scare you. Maybe you've

heard of some of the other men the book is about. El Greco, for instance. There was a fellow for you. Rembrandt. The great George Bellows. Down the line to Matthew Barnes. He is right here in San Francisco and you've probably passed him in the streets a dozen times. This is a great city. We've got plenty. Beniamino Bufano, Matthew Barnes and a dozen others.

"What I'm trying to tell you is this: Don't get art wrong. Don't get the idea these boys aren't just like you and the next fellow because (except for a very small difference loosely called genius) they are exactly like you, and mighty glad to be. When they're good, they don't drink tea, and they don't have their fingernails manicured.

"So. Matthew Barnes. I'll tell you about his stuff.

"He paints what you feel, only he makes you see it. (Get the idea?) Sometimes he paints what you see, only he does it so greatly you feel as if your eyes had just been opened. Not magic, genius. And a very usual sort of fellow, too. He opens your eyes to the world, and as he sees it, the world is a place where all who live are no more than visitors, which is gospel truth anyway. A lonely place. Earth and sea and sky, mountain and plain and tree. Sun and moon. And then the places of man: road and gate and house. Door and window. Wall and roof. Shape. City and street and the immortal visitor of the earth: yourself. Only when Matthew Barnes paints these places and things they begin to mean just a little more than they used to mean.

"Find out for yourself. It's about time people understood that art IS for everybody, and not for society ladies exclusively. Start with the paintings of Matthew Barnes. You will be starting very near the top."

55TH ANNUAL, ART ASSOCIATION

Matthew Barnes' work was mentioned with special emphasis in every criticism of the 55th Annual Exhibition of

the San Francisco Art Association where 414 works filled the galleries of the San Francisco Museum of Art, War Memorial Building. H.L. Dungan in the Oakland Tribune, January 27, 1935, commented:

> "...the high quality of the show rather drowned the noise of disgruntled artists and others.
>
> "Here are some of the best....Matthew Barnes' 'Christmas Night,' one of the few pictures by Western artists Sheldon Cheney has reproduced in his new book, 'Expressionism in Art.' It's a dark Christmas Night with a woman in pink outside a house; an argument of colors set in nearly black background."

In the summer of 1935, Johanne Bietry Salinger wrote extensively on Matthew Barnes in the News Letter and Wasp, August 17, in an article titled "Matthew Barnes Goes Forth in Poetic Quest":

> "Each artist of consequence has to go through his own stage of development alone. Art evolution is a slow process involving many complex problems, which have to do with the artist himself, his environment, association with other artists and theories discussed.
>
> "From the studio of Matthew Barnes has come a painting which sets a high standard of achievement for this artist. For the last two years Barnes had erred. He painted more than he had before. He allowed others to discuss his own work with him while still in the process of painting. The result was not satisfying and those of us who have admired Barnes from the start, felt keenly this set-back in his development.
>
> "Here is a painting which in technique and complete beauty places Barnes definitely as one of the few significant American artists of today.
>
> "Matthew Barnes has an innate perception of beauty. He has an inborn sense of color, composition, form and design. Entirely self-taught,

> his development has escaped the notice of the general public, who favor what is easily classified and can be labeled. His day will come, so affirms this last painting of his.
>
> "This picture, 'A Moment of Dream,' is again an expression of his poetic imagination. It is extremely well painted. It is a moonlight scene. A peaceful lake enclosed in the tender embrace of a warm stretch of land reflects in its depth opal rays of moonlight. Humble houses are asleep on the hillside by the lake in full sight of the moon. Two naked trees, their bare arms outstretched, bent in a contemplative gesture, offer a symbol of silent quest. The moon is bright and while breaking through the clouds, has splashed them with its golden light. A small canoe, as still as night, rests upon the motionless and shiny lake and a tiny white figure radiant with light stands in the canoe filling the solitude of the clear night with its own quest."

In 1936 Matthew Barnes acted on the jury of selection for the 56th Annual of the San Francisco Art Association. In the summer of this year he exhibited again in New York City, being among the representative California artists in more than 2000 entries at the first National Exhibition in the Rockefeller Center International Building opened by Mayor La Guardia.

FEDERAL ART PROJECT

In the fall of 1936, an exhibition of works by artists on the Federal Art Project for which Barnes finished two paintings, was held in the De Young Memorial Museum. Of this exhibit the San Francisco Examiner, November 22, 1936, stated:

> "Few of the best exhibitors are unknowns. For instance, although the paintings on the whole are inferior to the prints, the superior canvases are those of such an established artist as Matthew Barnes."

Joseph A. Danysh, now Regional Adviser of the Federal Arts Projects of the Pacific States, always a firm believer in Matthew Barnes, had written earlier:

> "Matthew Barnes has maintained a rigid artistic independence by earning his livelihood outside the artistic sphere, and painting whenever his occupation left him the energy and the leisure.
>
> "There is a maxim about a prophet and his own home. Matthew Barnes well illustrates this. Here is a painter who for twenty-seven years has been working, living and painting in San Francisco, yet save for a few understanding souls his work is relatively unknown."

In the spring of 1937, at the most important local art showing of the season, the Fifty-seventh Annual of the San Francisco Art Association, Barnes was awarded the first Anne Bremer Memorial Prize of $300 for his mystic oil painting, "High Peak."

"High Peak" was a typical Barnes nocturne in blue, and of it, Alfred Frankenstein said in the San Francisco Chronicle, April 4, 1937:

> "One is especially pleased to see some sort of official recognition coming at long last to Matthew Barnes whose 'High Peak' won the first Anne Bremer Award.
>
> "Barnes works according to a limited formula, but when that formula is at its best, as in 'High Peak,' he can create a masterpiece of loneliness and coldness and eerie legendary desolation. 'High Peak' is the wind-blown jumping-off place at the outer edge of the world such as only a Celt might imagine."

The Art Digest, New York, in its April 15th issue reprinted Frankenstein's comment and pointed out that the high quality of the exhibition was due to:

> "....A seven-headed fourteen-eyed monster devouring artists at the rate of 100 an hour which stalked a few days ago through the halls of the San Francisco Museum of Art.
>
> "....Known officially as the Jury of Selection, the body (originated by William Clapp, director of the Oakland Civic Art Museum) operating with machine-age equipment for secret balloting agreed unanimously on only 45 works out of the 832 submitted. It then went over the doubtful examples and took in 113 more. The body was made up entirely of artists."

The San Francisco Call-Bulletin, April 17, 1937, ran a photograph of Matt Barnes under the caption, "How the Prize Winner Paints," with the statement that "he paints his nocturnes late at night in a bare studio draped to exclude noise and light, under blue lamps," and that "his new canvas is 'something out of my mind.'"

PHILOSOPHY

On March 10, 1933, Junius Cravens had evaluated Matthew Barnes' philosophy of art, saying in the Argonaut:

> "Matthew Barnes' work may be comparatively unknown, and it is certainly not popular. But in that respect art history is merely running true to form, so to speak, so it is beside the point, and of no importance.
>
> "Barnes translates the poetry and drama of the night and light of the conflict of opposites into terms of paint. The deserted slum at night, the cheap little 'movie palace' or the sordid corner saloon becomes a poetic drama, a

glowing gem of light and color through his brush. He proves the claim that 'beauty may be found in everything, even the garbage can.'

"But that is only the external, the apparent aspect of Barnes' art. He does not need to be 'true to life' in a literal sense because he goes far beneath the surface and touches the root of life itself. The scene, the external form, is merely a symbol of an emotion, so why need it be literal? His deserted streets and chaotic hilltops are really those deep, still paths of the soul that one must tread alone, and in which one meets constant conflict of darkness and light, of good and evil, of beauty and ugliness--a constant conflict of opposites that goes on within us all.

"Barnes is by nature a mystic, if there ever was one, and wherever he has followed the lone path he has produced something at least potentially great."

Of Matthew Barnes, Joseph Danysh also said:

"Any great individualist is a candidate for oblivion--at least so far as most of his contemporaries are concerned. It seems incredible today that the greatness of Rembrandt, Hals, Daumier, Van Gogh could ever have been questioned, or overlooked.

"A picture or two of Barnes may have been shown from time to time along with a large group in the San Francisco Annual, but such isolated instances give no idea of the steady growth of a fine technique, of the unfaltering pursuit of a subtle idea; of a great emotional value being reshaped and refined in picture after picture; of an uncompromising nature making tremendous sacrifices for an artistic convention that is beyond dispute; of his fine sense of the beautiful and the mystical in everyday existence. No painter anywhere has been able to translate into a living plastic language the lonely pilgrimage of a soul so truthfully as Barnes has done. He has created mystical nocturnes that are without a counterpart anywhere.

"Barnes is by no means an amateur in the dilettante sense, his esthetic sense is as severe as Rembrandt's or Picasso's. He has painted by himself, and for himself, not as a primitive, without cognizance of the great art tradition of the past--for he has seen works by most of the great masters--but the better to eschew the transient modes and influences, as well as the many compromises that disturb the artist's spiritual rapport with his canvas. If he is silent on theories of painting it is because his are more perfectly embodied in his painting than in words. He will tell you that 'the problem of painting is an individual one.' That 'if painting is a language, it must find its ultimate function in expressing significant thoughts and emotions. It is not sufficient for painting to be a rhetoric of abstractions on the one hand, or a trivial utterance on the other; it must use the language of plastic harmonies to reveal an eternal truth.'

"Barnes does not paint 'scenes,' he paints experiences. Not the passing encounters of a small character, but those selective experiences which are at some time true for all men who feel and think. In looking at a painting by Barnes, one feels one has somewhere before seen this world he has created. One has, but not in these forms, these houses, and these lights so much as in the kinship of living experience they represent."

CONCLUSION

Because Matthew Barnes is entirely self-taught, he has escaped academic bondage, but this is of little import to him. His canvases are honest, earnest attempts at the expression of his inner emotions; painting to him is a means of escape from the world. Moreover, the early influences which caused him to paint such subjects were exerted upon him before he ever thought of painting as a means of expression.

An interview with him, printed in the San Francisco Chronicle, May 19, 1935, said simply:

> "Barnes confesses freely that he paints as a medium of escape....He turned to painting as a relief from the turmoil of work. He paints entirely from imagination, 'weaving the picture out of the canvas,' as he puts it.
>
> "He confesses inability to portray a given subject, preferring to create his subjects in the process of arranging a composition to paint.
>
> "As the artist sees his own art, the principal influences on it have been the folklore and the fireside tales of his native country. 'The Scottish landscape is misty and sullen, not bright and cheerful like the Latin countries.
>
> "'Ours is a country where goblins, fairies and ghosts walk in the night. These creatures of ancestral folk imagination recreate themselves at the end of my brush.
>
> "'Stories of visitations from the other world I heard as a boy, told about a fireside with an awed sense of imminence, depth and mystery of the surrounding night outside--these memories weave themselves into my pictures and condition their character.'"

Barnes is admittedly not a portrait painter and because of this he does not seek commissions nor patrons. But neither is he, on the other hand, merely a tyro, innocently endeavoring to reproduce in form and color the hobgoblins which haunted his childhood. Painting is a slow process with him, and in thirty years he has produced less than fifty finished pictures--almost all of them of the same general nature, nocturnal, fantastic and apparently improvisatory in character. He has attended no art schools, submitted to no other than self-imposed discipline.

And yet slowly he has gained a recognition which is the more secure in that it has been grudgingly and charily given. His studio has become a sort of center for art students and younger artists who have revolted against the triteness of standardized methods which pervade academic art. In his own conservative fashion, he is dynamic in his influence, encouraging the young, striving painters about him to test their ability to be themselves--to express what they have to say as best they can, without submitting to fear of ridicule or stooping to easy imitation.

Except for brief trips to New York and Central America, Barnes has made San Francisco his home for thirty years--those thirty years in which he has striven to express his own emotions in paint. Neither a conformist nor a rebel, he believes that painting is an individual problem--and to his fellow-artists, friends and admirers, he is known simply as "Matt" Barnes, the man who paints because he wants to paint.

MATTHEW BARNES

REPRESENTATIVE

WORKS

Afternoon
Alley, The
Apartments
Blue Night
Blue Road
Boat House
Boat, The
Bridge, The
Butchertown
Christmas Night
City Corner
City Street
Crime and Concrete
Dancing Trees
Dusk Fantasy
Farm House
Ferry Building
Flats
Flood, The
Fog Belt
Fog Farm
Farms
Gas Station
Gossiping Ghosts
High Peak
Horses
Man with Staff
March Moon
Memories
Moment of Dream, A
Moon and the Movies
Mountain Cabin
Night Scene No. 5
Oakland Creek
Outskirts
Playful Snakes
Portrait with Trees
Russ in the Fog
Sea Lyric
Shacks
Shop Windows
Small Car
Storm
Summer's Night
Telegraph Hill

Three Homes
Trees at Night
Truck Ranch, South City
Two Men, The
Union Iron Works
Yellow Lamps
Yellow Street

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

Joseph Danysh, San Francisco, California
(One unnamed)

Mr. and Mrs. Gemperle, San Francisco, California
(Three unnamed)

Adaline Kent (Mrs. Robert Boardman Howard),
San Francisco, California
Flats

Mrs. Sigmund Stern, San Francisco, California
Sea Lyric

Mrs. Leon Mondell, Chicago, Illinois
Flood, The
Gas
Landscape

Dr. Ruth Benedick, New York City
Gossiping Ghosts
Three Gifts

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS:

Federal Arts Project
(Five unnamed)
Twilight

EXHIBITIONS:

San Francisco, California
San Francisco Art Association:
Union Iron Works (pastel), 1916
Second Jury Free Exhibition, 1918,
California Palace of Fine Arts
Telegraph Hill (pastel)
Annual Exhibition at California Palace
of Fine Arts
Oakland Creek

Forty-third Annual, 1919, California
Palace of Fine Arts
Boat House (pastel)
Butchertown
Forty-fifth Annual, 1921
Represented
Third Jury Free Exhibition, 1921,
California Palace of Fine Arts
Truck Ranch, South City
Forty-sixth Annual, 1922, California
Palace of Fine Arts
Fog Belt (oil)
Yellow Road (oil)
Forty-seventh Annual, 1924, California
Palace of Fine Arts
Fog Farm
Recollections
Stiff Grade, A
Forty-ninth Annual, 1927, California
School of Fine Arts
Flood
Summer's Night
Fiftieth Annual, 1928, California
School of Fine Arts
March Moon
Fifty-first Annual, 1929, California
School of Fine Arts
Gossiping Ghosts (oil)
Night Radiance (oil)
Russ in the Fog (oil)
Fifty-third Annual, 1931, California
Palace of the Legion of Honor
Playful Snakes (oil)
Fifty-fourth Annual, 1932, California
Palace of the Legion of Honor
City Corner (oil)
Memories (oil)
Fifty-fifth Annual, 1935, San Francisco
Museum of Art
Christmas Night
Fifty-seventh Annual, 1937, San Francisco
Museum of Art
High Peak (oil)
East-West Gallery of Fine Arts,
Landscape Compositions, January 1928
Modern Gallery
One-man Show, January 1928
Deserted Cabin
Flood, The
Hillside, San Bruno

Outskirts
Telegraph Hill
Truck Ranch
East-West Gallery
Modern Gallery Group, May 1928
Summer Landscape
Winter Landscape
Modern Gallery Group, January 1928
Ghost of Darkness
Moon and the Movies
Barnes-Hagedorn Joint Exhibition, February 1929
Night Radiance
Crime and Concrete
Gossiping Ghosts
Flats
Russ in the Fog
Summer Storm
Trinkets and Toys
First Summer Annual Traveling Exhibition, 1932
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
Sea Lyric
City of Paris Galleries
Society of Progressive Artists, January 1933
Crime and Concrete
Second One-man Show, February 1933
Crime and Concrete
Dancing Trees
Playful Snakes
Portrait with Trees
Storm
Adams-Danysh Galleries
One-man Show, March 1934
Moon and the Movies
Nude
Telegraph Hill
Three Houses
Traveling Exhibition, June 1934
Storm, The
Society of Progressive Artists, Second Annual, October 1934
Represented
California Palace of the Legion of Honor, September 1934
Houses
Night Scene
De Young Memorial Museum, June 1935
Night Scene
Federal Art Project Exhibition, November 1936
Represented
Paul Elder's Gallery, August 1935
Moment of Dream, A

Berkeley, California
Berkeley League of Fine Arts Annual, League Building, December 1928
Night (oil)

Oakland, California
Annual Traveling Exhibition, 1932
Oakland Art Gallery
Sea Lyric

Los Angeles, California
First Annual Traveling Exhibition, 1932
Sea Lyric

California-Pacific International Exposition, May-November 1935
Night Scene

New York City
Museum of Modern Art
First National Exhibition, 1936 at the Rockefeller Center International Building

AWARDS:

San Francisco Art Association, Forty-ninth Annual, April 1927
Honorable Mention for "Flood"
Fiftieth Annual, April 1928
Second Anne Bremer Prize, $100 divided with Ralph Chesse for "March Moon"
Fifty-seventh Annual, 1937
First Anne Bremer Prize, $300 for "High Peak"

CLUBS:

Member:
San Francisco Art Association

JURY SERVICE:

San Francisco Art Association
San Francisco Museum of Art,
Fifty-sixth Annual, January 1936--Member Jury of Selection

MATTHEW BARNES

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